

# Saint Cecilia

P A R I S H



Come, ye blessed . . .

by Nathaniel Mokgosi, 1980

**Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time**  
1 February 2026

# Saint Cecilia

P A R I S H

1 FEBRUARY 2026

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

PRELUDE | Retrospection

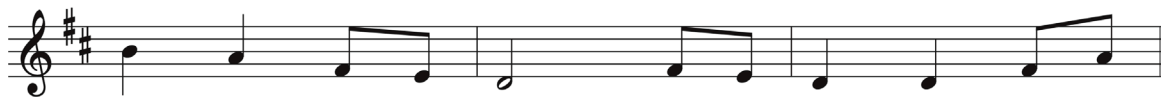
Florence Price  
(1887-1953)

ENTRANCE PROCESSION | Sing A New Church

NETTLETON



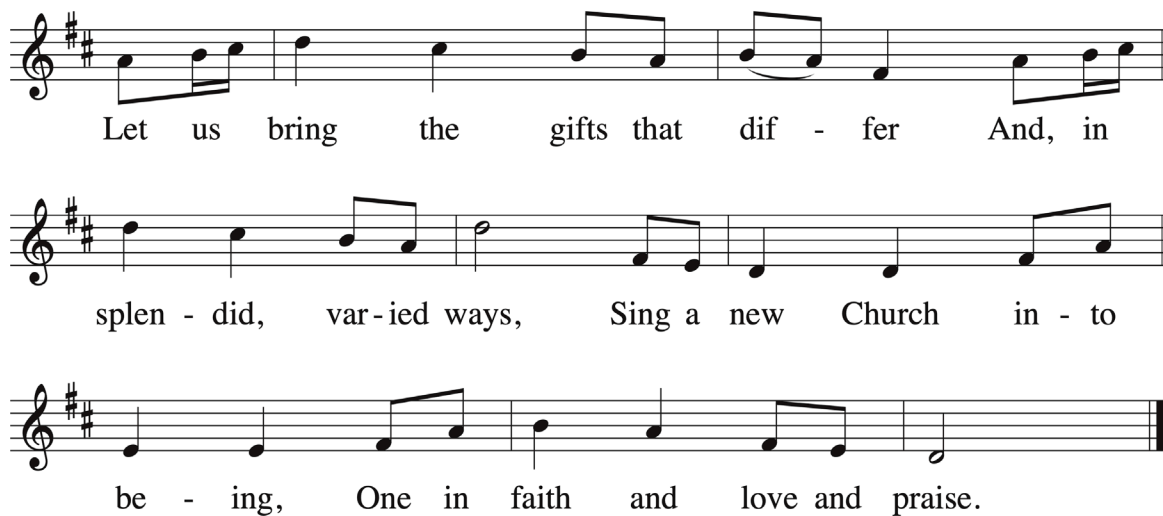
1. Sum - moned by the God who made us Rich in  
2. Ra - diant ris - en from the wa - ter, Robed in  
3. Trust the good - ness of cre - a - tion; Trust the  
4. Bring the hopes of ev - 'ry na - tion; Bring the  
5. Draw to - geth - er at one ta - ble All the



our di - ver - si - ty, Gath - ered in the name of  
ho - li - ness and light, Male and fe - male in God's  
Spir - it strong with - in. Dare to dream the vi - sion  
art of ev - 'ry race. Weave a song of peace and  
hu - man fam - i - ly; Shape a cir - cle ev - er



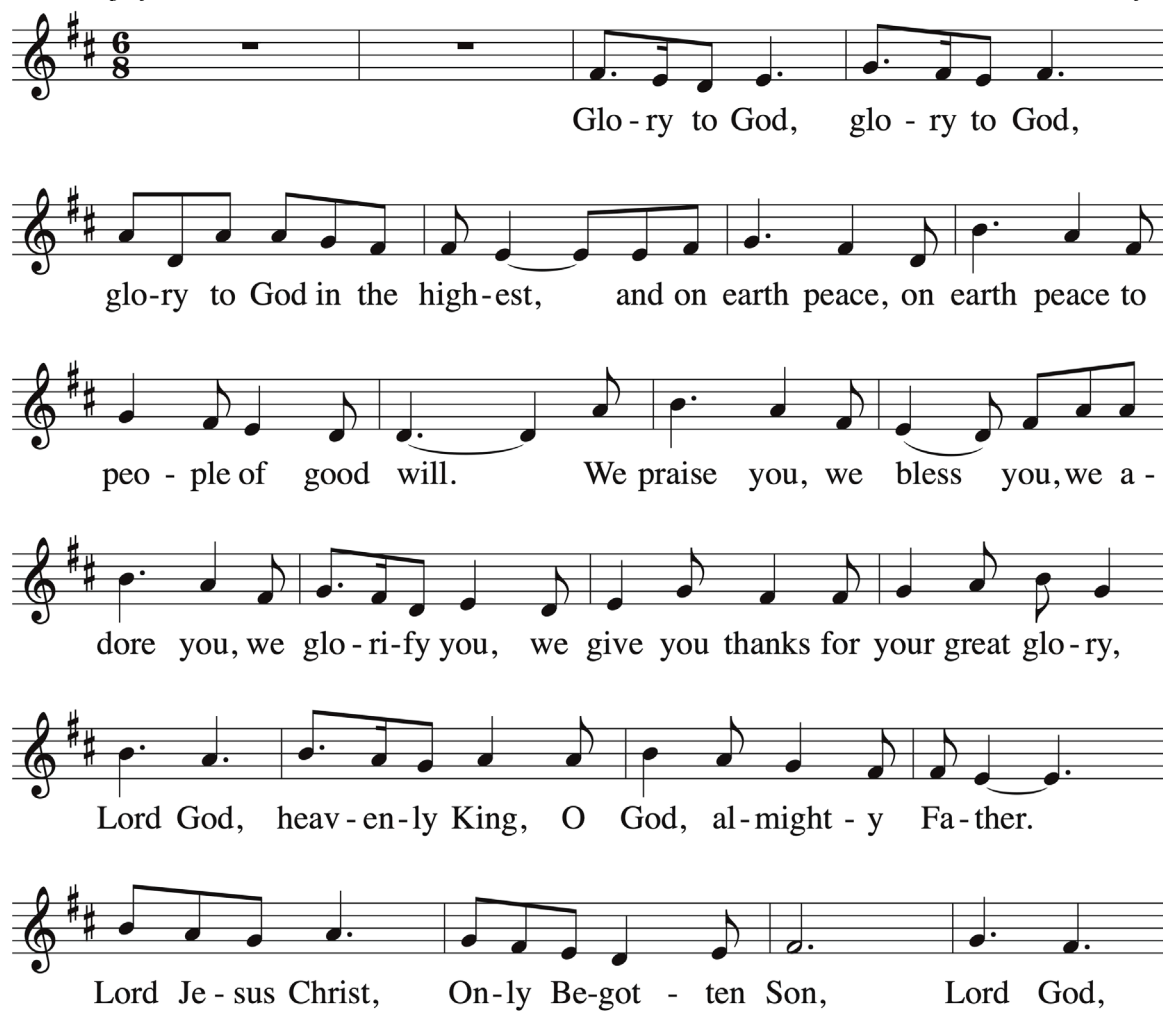
Je - sus, Rich - er still in u - ni - ty:  
im - age, Male and fe - male, God's de - light:  
prom - ised, Sprung from seed of what has been.  
jus - tice; Let it sound through time and space.  
wid - er And a peo - ple ev - er free.



Let us bring the gifts that dif - fer And, in  
splen - did, var - ied ways, Sing a new Church in - to  
be - ing, One in faith and love and praise.

GLORIA | Mass of Joy and Peace

Tony E. Alonso



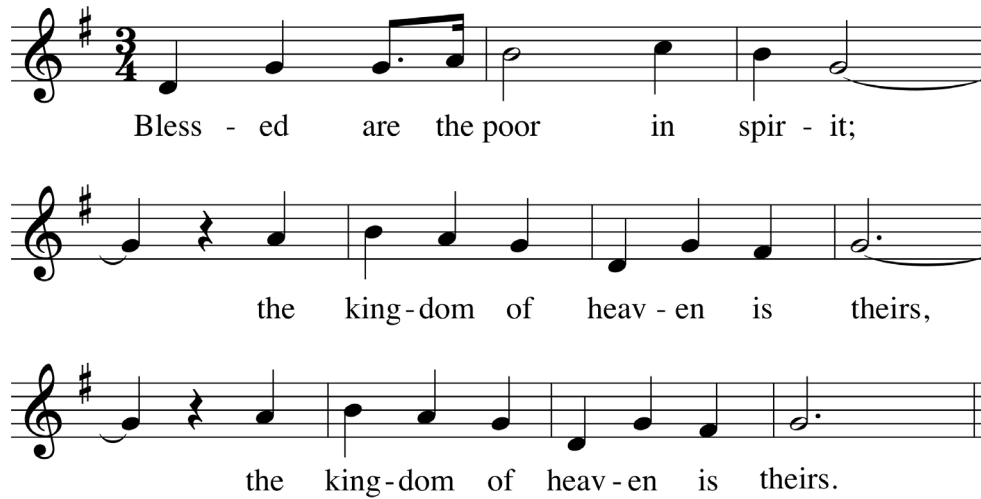
Glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God,  
glo - ry to God in the high - est, and on earth peace, on earth peace to  
peo - ple of good will. We praise you, we bless you, we a -  
dore you, we glo - ri - fy you, we give you thanks for your great glo - ry,  
Lord God, heav - en - ly King, O God, al - might - y Fa - ther.  
Lord Je - sus Christ, On - ly Be - got - ten Son, Lord God,

Lamb of God, Son of the Fa-ther, you take a-way the  
sins of the world, have mer-cy on us; you take a-way the  
sins of the world, re - ceive our prayer; you are seat-ed at the  
right hand of the Fa - ther, have mer - cy on us. For  
you a-lone are the Ho-ly One, you a-lone are the Lord,  
you a-lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly  
Spir-it, in the glo-ry of God the Fa-ther. A - men. A - men.

COLLECT

## LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING | Zephaniah 2: 3; 3:12-13



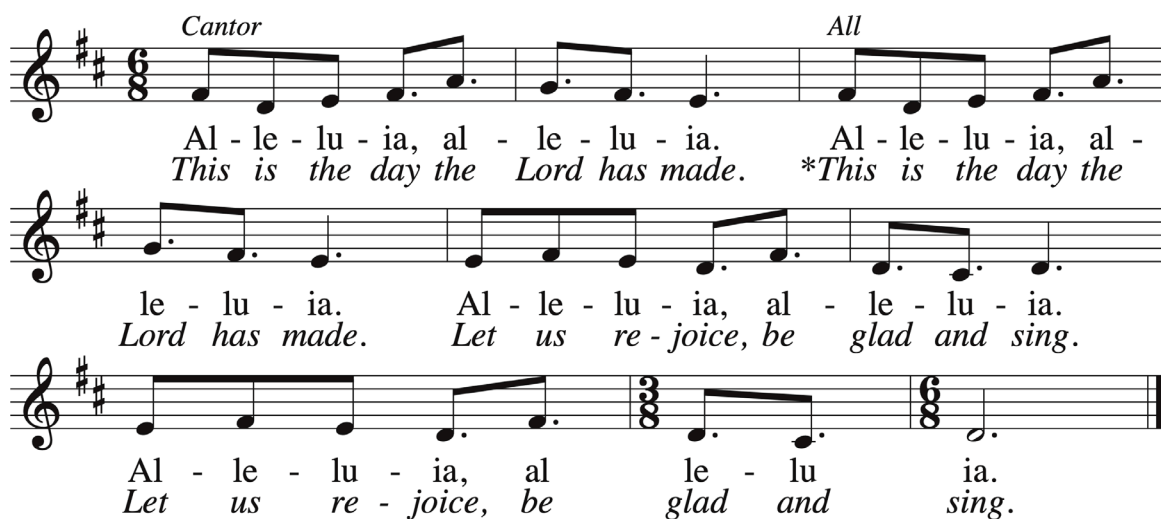
Bless - ed are the poor in spir - it;  
the king - dom of heav - en is theirs,  
the king - dom of heav - en is theirs.

1. It is the Lord who preserves fidelity forever, who does justice to those who are oppressed.  
It is he who gives bread to the hungry, the Lord who sets prisoners free.
2. The Lord who opens the eyes of the blind, the Lord who raises up those who are bowed down.  
It is the Lord who loves the just, the Lord who protects the stranger.
3. The Lord upholds the orphan and the widow but thwarts the path of the wicked.  
The Lord will reign forever, the God of Sion from age to age.

## SECOND READING | 1 Corinthians 1: 26-31

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION | Ruah Mass

Ian Callanan



*Cantor* Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. *All* Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.  
*This is the day the Lord has made. \*This is the day the*  
le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.  
*Lord has made. Let us re - jice, be glad and sing.*  
Al - le - lu - ia, al le - lu ia.  
*Let us re - jice, be glad and sing.*

## GOSPEL | Matthew 5: 1-12a

## 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!

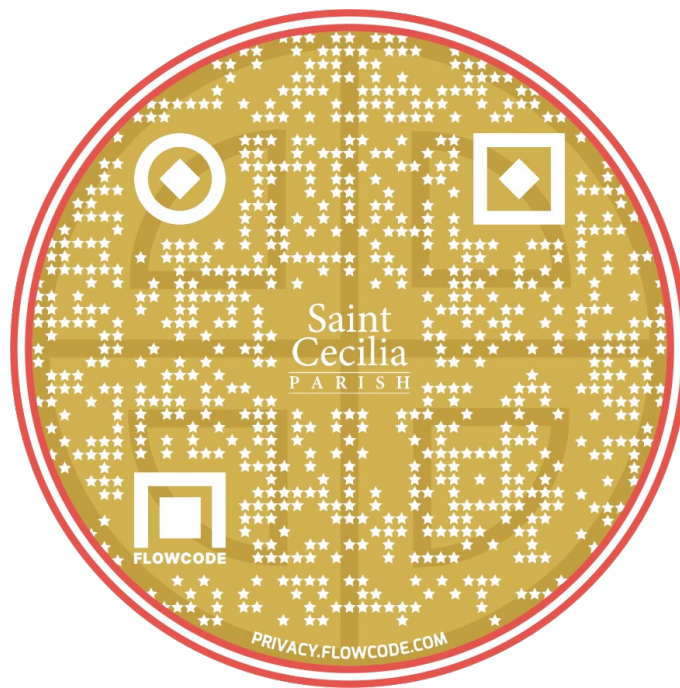
We are grateful for your ongoing support of Saint Cecilia. The easiest way to make a financial contribution to our parish is to use the parish Flowcode below.

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 | Lead, Kindly Light

Steven C. Warner



Lead, kind - ly Light, a - mid the gloom of eve - ning.



Lord, lead me on! Lord, lead me on!



On through the night! On to your ra-diance!



Lead, kind - ly Light! Lead, kind - ly Light!

Verses




1. The night is dark, and I am far from home,  
2. Not al - ways thus, I sel - dom looked for you,  
3. So long your pow'r has blest me on my way,



di - rect my feet; I do not ask to see  
I loved to choose and seek my path a - lone.  
and still it leads, past hill and storm and night!



the dis - tant scene; on step e - nough for me.  
In spite of fear, my pride con-trolled my will,  
And with the morn, those an - gel fac - es smile,



So lead me on - ward, Lord, and hear my plea.  
re - mem-ber not my past, but lead me still.  
which I have loved long since, and lost a - while.

D.C.

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, who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -

## MEMORIAL ACCLAMATION | Mass of Christ the Savior

Dan Schutte

Save us, save us, Sav-ior of the world, for by your  
 Cross and Res - ur - rec - tion you have set us free.

## AMEN | Mass of Christ the Savior

Dan Schutte

A - men. A - men. A - men.

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

## THE EXCHANGE OF PEACE

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

## AGNUS DEI | Mass of Christ the Savior

Dan Schutte

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sins of the world, have mer-cy on us. world, 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.

Eye has not seen, ear has not heard what God has read-y for  
 those who love him; Spir - it of love, come, give us the  
 mind of Je - sus, teach us the wis-dom of God.

## Verses 1-3

1. When pain and sor - row weigh us down, be near to us, O  
 2. Our lives are but a sin - gle breath, we flow-er and we  
 3. To those who see with eyes of faith, the Lord is ev - er  
 Lord, for - give the weak - ness of our faith, and  
 fade, yet all our days are in your hands, so  
 near, re - flect - ed in the fac - es of  
 D.C.  
 bear us up with - in your peace-ful word.  
 we re - turn in love what love has made.  
 all the poor and low - ly of the world.

## Verse 4

4. We sing a mys-t'ry from the past in halls where saints have  
 trod, yet ev - er new the mu - sic rings to  
 D.C.  
 Je - sus, Liv - ing Song of God.

*Wie lieblich sind deine Wohnungen,  
Herr Zebaoth!  
meine Seele verlanget und sehnet sich  
nach den Vorhöfen des Herren;  
Mein Leib und Seele freuet sich  
in dem lebendigen Gott.*

How lovely are your dwelling places,  
O Lord of hosts!  
My soul yearns and pines  
for the courts of the Lord,  
my heart and body cry out  
to the living God.

*Wohl denen, die in deinem Hause wohnen,  
die loben dich immerdar.*

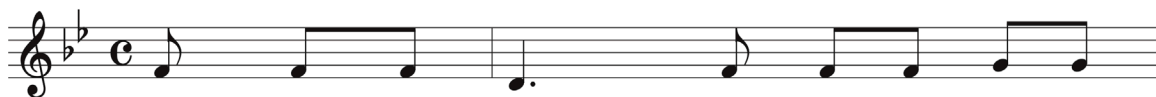
Blessed are they that dwell in your house:  
they shall praise you continually.

*Psalm 84*

## CONCLUDING RITES

RECESSIONAL | How Great Thou Art

Swedish folk melody



1. O Lord my God, when I in awe-some  
2. When through the woods and for-est glades I  
3. And when I think that God, his Son not  
4. When Christ shall come with shout of ac - cla -



won - der Con - sid - er all the works thy hands have  
wan - der And hear the birds sing sweet - ly in the  
spar - ing, Sent him to die, I scarce can take it  
ma - tion And take me home, what joy shall fill my



made, I see the stars, I hear the roll - ing  
trees, When I look down from loft - y moun-tain  
in That on the cross, my bur - den glad - ly  
heart! Then I shall bow in hum - ble ad - o -

wan - der      And hear the birds      sing sweet - ly    in the  
 spar - ing,      Sent him to die,      I scarce can take it  
 ma - tion      And take me home,      what joy shall fill my



made,      I see the stars,      I hear the roll - ing  
 trees,      When I look down      from loft - y moun - tain  
 in      That on the cross,      my bur - den glad - ly  
 heart!      Then I shall bow      in hum - ble ad - o -



thun - der,      Thy pow'r through - out      the u - ni - verse dis - played!  
 gran - deur      And hear the brook and feel the gen - tle breeze,  
 bear - ing,      He bled and died to take a - way my sin!  
 ra - tion      And there pro - claim,      "My God, how great thou art!"



Then sings my soul, my Sav - ior God, to thee:      How great thou



art, how great thou art!      Then sings my soul, my Sav - ior God, to



thee:      How great thou art,      how great thou art!

POSTLUDE | King of Kings  
 Brett Maguire, *organ*

Ralph Simpson  
 b. 1943

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).

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

# 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 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.

# OUR COMMUNITY NEWS



## MINISTERS OF THE LITURGY

**Saturday, January 31 | 5:00 p.m.**

Rev. Peter Grover, OMV, celebrant  
Cynthia Wanner, lector

**Sunday, February 1 | 8:00 a.m.**

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

**Sunday, February 1 | 9:30 a.m.**

Rev. John Unni, celebrant  
Rev. Mr. Christopher Brolly, SJ, deacon  
Kate McGillicuddy, Tim McGillicuddy, Clare Gillis, lectors

**Sunday, February 1 | 11:30 a.m.**

Rev. John Unni, celebrant  
Jerry McElroy, Jen Kowieski, Karen McMenamy, lectors

**Sunday, February 1 | 6:00 p.m.**

Rev. Jim Shaughnessy, SJ, celebrant  
Chika Offurum, lector

## SPECIAL INTENTIONS

**Saturday, January 31 | 5:00 p.m.**

Angelo Valente Sr, *Memorial*

**Sunday, February 1 | 9:30 a.m.**

Larry Kessler, 2nd Anniversary  
Margot Cunnane, *Memorial*  
Fr. Vin Maffei, *Memorial*  
Michelle Montgomery, *Memorial*  
Nuno Loureiro, *Memorial*  
Tim Easterly, *Memorial*  
Catherine Aloisi, *Memorial*

**Sunday, February 1 | 6:00 p.m.**

Josef Brandl, *Memorial*  
Anna Brandl, *Memorial*

## TODAY'S READINGS

Zephaniah 2:3; 3:12-13  
1 Corinthians 1:26-31  
Matthew 5:1-12a

## NEXT SUNDAY'S READINGS

Isaiah 58:7-10  
1 Corinthians 2:1-5  
Matthew 5:13-16

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Thank you for your generous  
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# PRAYERS & OCCASIONS

## Our Deceased

**Sylvia Garza** died on January 26. Pray for her eternal repose and for the consolation of her family and friends. May her soul and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

## Our Sick

Pray for all our sick and for those who are in need of our prayer, especially **Glenn Gallo, Marc Pelletier, Fred Tufts, Baby Eloise Josephine Mason, Kevin J. Owens, So Kwai Sim, Daria, Maureen McLaughlin, Anne Kenney, and Paul Surette.**

## Welcome to Saint Cecilia Parish!

We are pleased to welcome the following new members of our community: **Emily Costa, Therese Hearons, Randy Corriveau, and Sean Campbell and Winta Stefanos.** If you have not previously registered, you can do so online at [www.stceciliaboston.org](http://www.stceciliaboston.org).

## Feast of the Presentation of the Lord

Tomorrow's Feast of the Presentation of the Lord, sometimes called Candlemas or the Feast of the Purification, commemorates Mary and Joseph taking Jesus to the Temple in Jerusalem forty days after his birth to present him to the Lord. The feast also commemorates Mary's ritual purification after childbirth according to Jewish law.

## World Day for Consecrated Life

In 1997, Pope John Paul II instituted a day of prayer for women and men in consecrated life. This celebration occurs tomorrow on February 2. We pray for all those who have consecrated their lives to Christ in the religious life by professing the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity, and obedience. We pray in a special way for **Fr. Jim Shaughnessy, SJ** and **Deacon Christopher Brolly, SJ**, members of the Society of Jesus who are on our pastoral staff; **Fr. John Predmore, SJ**, also a member of the Society of Jesus who assists us by presiding at some of our liturgies; **Fr. Peter Grover, OMV**, a member of the Oblates of the Virgin Mary who is also one of our regular presiders; **Sr. Ann Marie Cook, SNDdeN** of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, and **Sr. Mary Ann Hinsdale, IHM** of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary—both Sisters are active members of the parish. May all men and women in consecrated life continue to live their lives in accord with the gospel of Jesus and respond with generosity of heart to the gift of their vocation.

## The Blessing of Throats

On Tuesday, February 3, the Church celebrates the Memorial of Saint Blaise, bishop and martyr. Saint Blaise lived in Turkey and Armenia during the fourth century and, according to tradition, once saved a boy who was choking on a fish bone. From the eighth century onwards, Saint Blaise has been invoked on behalf of the sick and it has been said that those who light a candle in his memory will be preserved from illnesses of the throat. At Saint Cecilia, a collective Blessing of Throats will be given at this weekend's liturgies.

## Celebration of First Reconciliation

Next Saturday, February 7, we will celebrate the sacrament of first reconciliation with our 25 youngsters preparing to receive First Holy Communion on May 9. Pray for our second graders and for all the children in our Faith Formation Program—that the gentle and loving presence of God continues to be made known to them.

## Alex Pretti's Killing

Last Saturday, Alex Pretti, an ICU nurse and an American citizen, was killed by federal agents in Minneapolis, sparking nationwide grief, protest, and calls for accountability. This is a time for the People of God to stand unequivocally for justice and for the dignity of every human life. Let us stand with those who suffer, offer support to those in need, and pray for healing, reconciliation, and the transformation of human hearts.

## Black History Month

During the month of February, we recognize that Black history is American history and to divorce the two is to perpetuate the systematic oppression and violence our siblings of color face. Black History Month is a time to celebrate and lift up the lives and achievements of Black Americans past and present. We pray that the learning happening this month in churches, schools, and workplaces will be meaningful and deep-rooted. And we ask God to open our hearts and minds, and to give us spirits willing to learn and be transformed. May this month be a time of curiosity and sharing, conversations and celebrations, challenge and encouragement.



## SMALL GROUP CONNECTIONS

**IN PERSON: SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1  
AFTER THE 9:30 MASS | CLASSROOM 3**

Due to last weekend's snowstorm, the Parish Pastoral Council has rescheduled the in-person Small Group Connections for this Sunday. Join the PPC after 9:30am Mass for prayerful conversation inspired by Sunday's Gospel. To sign up, please email the Parish Pastoral Council.

## SIT & KNIT

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1 | 9:30AM - 12PM | PARISH HALL**

The Knitting and Crochet Ministry will be meeting on Sunday February 1, 2026 from 9:30am to 12:00pm. We will continue to work on assembling and crocheting blanket squares together, stop by and see us at work.

## FAR FLUNG FLOCK COFFEE HOUR: DEACON CHRISTOPHER BROLLY, SJ

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1 | 4PM VIA ZOOM**

This Sunday afternoon, the FFF will welcome Deacon Christopher Brolly, SJ as their online coffee hour guest. Christopher, a member of the Society of Jesus for over 10 years, began his ministry at Saint Cecilia in the fall of 2023, working with Tanya Rybarczyk in the RCIA program. Since his diaconal ordination on September 20, 2025, Christopher assists at one or two of our Sunday liturgies each week, he prepares and delivers homilies on a regular basis, and he performs occasional baptisms and wedding ceremonies. Christopher looks forward to sharing his call to ministry with all of us. If you are not already registered, you can request the coffee hour link by emailing the ministry.

## GBIO: FIRST LISTENING SESSION

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1 | AFTER THE 6PM MASS  
PARISH HALL**

The Saint Cecilia chapter of the Greater Boston Interfaith Organization will be holding its first small group listening session after the 6pm Mass in the parish hall.

GBIO's small group listening sessions will help identify future campaigns and cations. Listening session participants will be invited to share thoughts and stories concerning the critical issues currently affecting our neighborhoods.

To sign up for this upcoming session or future sessions, head to [www.tinyurl.com/gbio-listening-sessions](http://www.tinyurl.com/gbio-listening-sessions). For more information on GBIO, see page 6 of the bulletin or contact the ministry email.

## CAMINO DE SANTIAGO

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1 | 2PM | COMMUNITY ROOM**

PILGRIMAGE, verb: the journey to a distant, sacred goal

A pilgrimage is a journey, both outwards to hallowed places and inwards to spiritual growth. Join Nancy Nee Hanifin and Coffee Czar Karen McMenemy for the first of two presentations on the Camino de Santiago de Compostela. The Camino can be seen as an extended, moving retreat, offering tremendous opportunities for meditative walking, reflection and introspection. A pilgrimage journey is the most graphic reminder we can have that our life as a whole is a pilgrimage. Each of us is on a journey with God, and on a journey to God.

In 2010 Nancy walked the 500 miles across Spain to the tomb of Saint James. On her return she founded the Boston Chapter of the American Pilgrims on the Camino. Karen McMenemy joined Nancy as co-chair after her own 500 mile journey in 2015. Combined they have walked thousands of miles, well over a dozen times, volunteered in the Pilgrims' Office in Santiago (Karen) and mentored hundreds of aspiring pilgrims from across New England. The meetings will cover the history of the Camino, traditions and practical planning and preparation for walking the Way of Saint James.

## THE SACRAMENT OF THE SICK

**NEXT WEEKEND: FEBRUARY 7/8**

*"Is there anyone sick among you?"*

This question, found in the New Testament Letter of James, gives the response that the sick should call for the priests of the Church who are to pray over and anoint the sick with oil in the name of the Lord. Never hesitate to call the parish office to ask for prayer and the Sacrament of the Sick prior to surgery or when diagnosed with serious illness. This sacrament is not to be looked upon as the "Last Rites" but rather as a powerful instrument of God's healing presence. On February 11, the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, the Church observes World Day of the Sick. This observance is a reminder to pray for all those who are sick and to recognize and honor those who work in healthcare, as well as those who serve as caregivers. Next Sunday, February 8, we will observe this day with a special Blessing of Healthcare Workers and Caregivers at the 9:30 and 11:30 liturgies. The Sacrament of the Sick will be offered after the 5:00p.m. (Saturday), and 8:00 and 11:30 a.m. liturgies that same weekend. The sacrament is intended for those who are living with a physical illness, a mental health condition, a spiritual sickness, a substance abuse disorder, or the frailty of advanced age. If you would like to take part in this special celebration, be sure to attend one of these liturgies.

## KNITTING & CROCHET MINISTRY MEETING

**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 2 | 3:30PM VIA ZOOM**

Monthly Knitting & Crochet Zoom session is scheduled for Monday, February 2, 3:30-4:30. For more information, please contact the ministry email.

## NIGHT OF WORSHIP

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3 | 7PM - 8PM | SANCUARY**

All parishioners, regardless of age, are invited to spend an hour with the Lord before the Blessed Sacrament. Praise and worship music led by the Young Adult Ministry will guide your meditation and enrich your prayer in adoration. Please enter from the side door on Saint Cecilia Street and ring the bell to be let in. Can't join us in person? We'll be live-streaming our worship service over Zoom. Register to receive a Zoom link each month here: [www.tinyurl.com/stc-night-of-worship](http://www.tinyurl.com/stc-night-of-worship).

## BEREAVEMENT GROUP

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 4 | 6PM VIA ZOOM**

When a loved one dies, everything changes. At Saint Cecilia, we believe no one should walk alone in grief and loneliness. Wherever you are in your grief, you're welcome here. No pressure. No timeline. Just an open, steady invitation to join a supportive community. Please contact Mary Wessel at her parish email for the Zoom link.

## ANNA & SIMEON SENIORS

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5 | 10AM | PARISH HALL**

The next Anna and Simeon Seniors Meeting will be held on Thursday, February 5th. From 10:00 to 10:30 am there will be coffee/tea and conversation, and at 10:30 there will be time for prayer. All parish seniors are invited to participate

## MENTAL HEALTH DROP-IN GROUP

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 8 | 1PM | CLASSROOM 1**

Join us for a video message from Brian McLaren, from the Center for Contemplative Action, on "Good News in a Fractured World," followed by a small group discussion. All are welcome to attend.

## GBIO UPCOMING LISTENING SESSIONS

Founded in 1998, the GBIO is an interfaith coalition focused on making systemic changes to support social and economic justice in our local communities. Representing 60 member institutions—including Saint Cecilia—and more than 107,000 individuals, the GBIO has shown the power of collective strength in achieving a variety of goals.



### GBIO—A 2025 Housing Hero!

In response to hearing people's stories, the GBIO advocated for the Massachusetts Affordable Homes Act, leading to a major win for public housing in the 2023-2024 Massachusetts legislative session. The legislation includes a historic \$2.2 billion authorization for capital improvements to public housing units in Massachusetts. Additionally, the annual operating budget for state housing authorities was set at \$113 million—a \$21 million increase from the original proposal. This funding will make a difference in the lives of 70,000 vulnerable Massachusetts residents, setting a powerful precedent for the nation.

### Upcoming Listening Sessions at Saint Cecilia

In February, as part of our parish partnership with the GBIO, we will be hosting a series of small group listening sessions to help the GBIO identify future campaigns and actions. Listening session participants will be invited to share thoughts and stories concerning the critical issues currently affecting our neighborhoods. During these sessions we'll also explore potential changes, and brainstorm creative ways to respond. Listening sessions will be held on a Sunday in February following Mass.

### Getting Involved—Next Steps

- On the weekend of **January 31/February 1**, talk to a GBIO representative in the narthex after Mass or in the parish hall during coffee hospitality. On these dates, you will also be able to sign up to attend a February listening session.
- Join a listening session on **February 1, 7, and 8**. To sign up or to join the Saint Cecilia GBIO mailing list, head to [www.tinyurl.com/gbio-listening-sessions](http://www.tinyurl.com/gbio-listening-sessions).
- Contact the GBIO ministry email to join the Saint Cecilia GBIO team, sign up to participate in a listening session, or to learn more.

What changes would you like to see? Come share your thoughts, and let's make a difference!

WINTER WALK BOSTON

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 8 | 10AM | BOSTON COMMON

The Winter Walk is an initiative that believes ending homelessness is within our reach. The mission of the Walk is to raise awareness and funds towards that goal, and to support organizations that are working on prevention, support, and care for our homeless community.



We hope you can join us on February 8th, 2025 on the Boston Common, where the Walk will begin and end. Registration opens at 8:30 am with the event starting at 10 a. m Look for the tents on the corner of Charles Street and Beacon Street. It is hoped that each adult walker will raise \$100, either by paying it as a registration fee or raising it from friends and family. There is a Saint Cecilia Hunger & Homelessness team again this year - we've participated each year since the event began. We have designated Capuchin Mobile Ministries as the recipient of the funds we raise again this year. if you would like to join or support our Team (donations from non-walkers gladly accepted) please go to: <https://fundraisers.winterwalk.org/mark-lippolt>.

WEEKLY LENTEN DEVOTIONAL

SATURDAYS | FEBRUARY 21 & 28;  
MARCH 7, 14, 21, & 28 | 9AM | COMMUNITY ROOM

Matthew's Gospel tells us that right after Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist, he was led by the Spirit into the desert where he fasted for forty days and forty nights. Our own Lenten awakening is also a journey through the wilderness —a time of both struggle and promise. This Lent, we invite you to join us for a weekly Saturday morning devotional, "Have a Beautiful, Terrible Lent!" using resources created by Kate Bowler. Kate is a four-time New York Times bestselling author, award-winning podcast host, and professor of religious history at Duke University. Using Kate's resources, we will companion with one another as we embrace life's everyday struggles alongside its beauty and navigate the darkness as we move towards the light and promise of Easter. Lent is a time of renewal and grace, but you don't have to go it alone. You are welcome to come when you can—no six-week commitment is necessary and drop-ins are always welcome. For more information, reach out to Mary Wessel at her parish email.

COMING UP AT SAINT CECILIA

SATURDAY, JAN. 31 - FEB. 5

SATURDAY, JANUARY 31

GBIO Reps after 5pm Mass | Narthex

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1

GBIO Reps after Sunday Masses | Narthex + Parish Hall

Wisdom Group | 8:30am via Zoom

Sit & Knit | 9:30am - 12pm | Parish Hall

Camino Presentation | 2pm | Comm. Room

FFF Coffee Hour | 4pm via Zoom

GBIO Listening Session after 6pm Mass

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 2

Knitting & Crochet Ministry Meeting | 3:30pm via Zoom

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3

Belvidere Midday Tuesday | 12pm | Comm. Room

Night of Worship | 7pm | Sanctuary

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 4

Bereavement Group | 6pm via Zoom

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5

Anna & Simeon Seniors | 10am | Parish Hall

Wisdom Group | 7:30pm via Zoom



## A SPACE TO SHARE

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11 | 6:30PM - 8PM  
COMMUNITY ROOM**

Space to Share is a place for LGBTQ+ parishioners to speak freely about the challenges and joys of being LGBTQ+ and Catholic (or whatever else is on our minds). Whether it's your first visit or you're a biweekly regular, we'd love to have you join us! Please note the day change - Space to Share will meet on **Wednesday**.

## SAINT VALENTINE'S DAY AND BHCHP

This February, in honor of Saint Valentine's Day, we will continue our tradition of supporting non-profit agencies that help children. This year we are looking to provide much-needed items to the infants and children who are patients at the Family Clinic run by our long-time friends at Boston Health Care for the Homeless.



You can get detailed information about their Amazon Wish List at: [https://www.amazon.com/registries/gl/quest-view/7COQD7MHU7ZD?ref=cm\\_sw\\_r\\_cp\\_ud\\_ggr-subnav-share\\_NOF72C7PG1C7VBC8WQH8](https://www.amazon.com/registries/gl/quest-view/7COQD7MHU7ZD?ref=cm_sw_r_cp_ud_ggr-subnav-share_NOF72C7PG1C7VBC8WQH8).

For those of you who prefer to "shop local," there will be plastic bins in the narthex where you can place these important items: diapers (especially sizes 5, 6, 7 and pull-ups for 2T to 5T, baby wipes, and Ensure drinks (vanilla and strawberry).

Thanks for your customary generosity!

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY: WOMEN AT THE WOMEN'S LUNCH PLACE

If you have some time available weekdays Monday-Thursday between the hours of 9:30 am and 3:00 pm we can use your help at the Women's Lunch place residence. All days and times are currently open, but we prefer those who can commit to a particular day and time slot. The work involves distributing items to WLP guests and keeping the storage/inventory room neat and organized. The location is close to St. Cecilia's. If you are interested or for further information, please contact Ann at the Advent Giving Tree ministry email.

# ETHICAL INVESTING

· Part 1 ·

This is a three part series about how to ethically invest our money, sponsored by the Saint Cecilia Climate Justice Group as part of the Parish Laudato Si' Action Plan. We will look at what is ethical investing, what do the Gospels and the Church say about it, and what can people do to invest more ethically.

Jesus says to the young man: "Go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." (Matthew 19:21). This is a very radical thing for any of us to do, but Jesus challenges us to think about our wealth and comfort coming at the expense of others. Donating to charity and causes is a worthwhile form of investment to help the poor, and improve society. We also have to make sure the rest of our money is used responsibly.

Ethical investing is about making sure our money is being used for good and not for evil. We may look to make the most money we can, but in a complex global economy, the rate of return may not include the costs of worker exploitation, human trafficking, slavery, environmental degradation, and violence. The positive side is that money invested wisely can lead to good jobs, improved communities, and healthy living, as well as a reasonable return on investment.



# THE BEATITUDES



Image: Haywood Street Beatitudes by Christopher Holt (2018)

Christians have viewed the Beatitudes as a new ethic or moral code. But they are more than that. Jesus was challenging his contemporaries to live according to God's reign, as a new covenant people, a people whose hearts were renewed by the word and work of the living God. He was asking them to live as he lived. His own commitment to a different way of living was based on his conviction that he was called to work to bring about the reign of God. His teaching was about the kingdom of God not in heaven but on earth, and it required a transformation of the humanly created world of societies and domination systems. It was a challenge to abandon conventional values for what he saw as God's values. In his world of earthly kingdoms and rigid social strata, it was a radical message.

## Here is what some of our favorite people have to say about the Beatitudes:

The Beatitudes are in some sense the Christian's identity card. They identify us as followers of Jesus. We are called to be blessed, to be followers of Jesus, to confront the troubles and anxieties of our age with the spirit and love of Jesus.

- Pope Francis

The Beatitudes are no spiritual "to do list" to be attempted by eager, rule-keeping disciples. It is a spiritual "done" list of the qualities God brings to bear in the people who follow Jesus.

- Ronnie McBrayer

The beatitudes mean deeper mercy for those who experience more divisive misery, deeper blessings for those whose hope is dimmest. They give an ultimate authority to certain people and their plight in the world. They signify not just a religious attitude, but a social attitude toward realities that should not exist among humans.

- Megan McKenna

Even when they call us mad, when they call us subversives and communists and all the epithets they put on us, we know we only preach the subversive witness of the Beatitudes, which have turned everything upside down.

- Oscar Romero

The Beatitudes are deliberately designed to shock us. If we're not shocked by the Beatitudes, it's only because we have tamed them with a patronizing sentimentality – and being sentimental about Jesus is the religious way of ignoring Jesus! Too often the Beatitudes are set aside into the category of "nice things that Jesus said that I don't really understand.

- Brian Zahnd

I have often wondered why people never want to put a stone monument of the Eight Beatitudes on a courthouse lawn. Then I realize that the Eight Beatitudes of Jesus would probably not be very good for any war, any macho worldview, the wealthy, or our consumer economy.

- Richard Rohr

The Beatitudes, in particular, are not teachings on how to be blessed. They are not instructions to do anything. They do not indicate conditions that are especially pleasing to God or good for human beings...They are explanations and illustrations, drawn from the immediate setting, of the present availability of the kingdom through personal relationship to Jesus. They single out cases that provide proof that, in him, the rule of God truly is available in life circumstances that are beyond all human hope.

- Dallas Willard



Originally published by the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Brentwood, NY on their "Daily Reflections" blog.

# WE'RE ALL BLESSED

BY MICHAEL K. MARSH



Image: Wikimedia

*Sermon on the Mount by Cosimo Rosselli (c. 1481 - 1482)*

“Blessed.” Jesus says that word nine times in today’s gospel (Matthew 5:1-12). We often talk about ourselves or others as being blessed. “I’m blessed.” “She’s blessed.” “We’re really blessed.” You’ve said and heard those things, right? But here’s what I wonder: what do they mean?

another that you are blessed what do you mean by that? And when you hear someone else say, “I’m really blessed,” how do you understand that? I ask those questions because I think what we mean when we talk about being blessed is often not what Jesus means when he talks about our being blessed.

What does it mean to be blessed? When you tell

Take a moment and think of one thing that points to or

indicates your blessedness. You got it, know what it is? Tell it to someone next to you or say it out loud.

What did you name? What's the mark or indicator of your blessedness? When I hear others talk about being blessed they often describe things like good health, healing from a sickness, well-being, wealth, some good fortune, success, getting through a difficult time, family, love or friendship, receiving support from another, getting something they wanted, things going their way. That's often how I've thought about it too. They're certainly good things and I want them for you and myself but is that really what it means to be blessed? Maybe it's better than that.

How many of you, when I asked you to name something that points to or indicates your blessedness, named one of the beatitudes in today's gospel?

Nobody? I just read it five minutes ago. I'm not surprised though. They're not at the top of my list either. I didn't ask that question as a test, criticism, or judgment but as a wondering that maybe we don't really get what it means to be blessed.

I suspect most of us think of blessedness as some sort of reward or favoritism from God. We're lucky or fortunate in contrast to someone who is not. We've received a particular benefit. Maybe our prayer was answered like we wanted. Maybe we even think we did things right as opposed to someone who did them wrong, or times when we did things wrong. Maybe we think that to be blessed means we've been chosen, picked, favored, benefitted.

What if that's not at all what it means to be blessed? What if blessedness is broader and bigger than that? What if we don't acquire or get blessedness? What if it's a given?

What if it's not unique or particular to certain individuals? What if there are no prerequisites or qualifications to be blessed? What if blessedness isn't exclusive to some but inclusive of all?

Imagine that one day you come to my office and say, "Mike, I've been counting my blessings and I've got a lot. I'm really blessed." And I say, "Yeah? So what? Every single person regardless of who they are is blessed. Every single person regardless of what he or she believes or doesn't believe is blessed. Every single person regardless of what he or she has done and left undone, is blessed. You're not that special. We're all blessed."

What would you think? How would you feel? Would that mess with your understanding of blessedness? Would you celebrate that all are blessed? Or would you feel as if I had taken something from you and that you're not as unique, important, or special as you thought you were or want to be? I think that's often how we see our blessedness. I am unique, important, special. I've benefited. God has seen me and done something for me. But I wonder if we make blessedness too small, too individualistic, too circumstantial.

Here's the thing. We're all already blessed. It's not something you get, earn, acquire, or receive. It's something you are. It's something you and I already are. We are already blessed. It was given us by the creator at our creation. And there's nothing you can do to be more blessed, and nothing you can do to lose your blessedness.

The distinction isn't between those who are blessed and those who are not blessed. The only distinction is between those who know they are blessed and those who have not yet recognized their blessedness. It's not a question of blessedness but a question of recognition.

Take being poor in spirit, for example. Being poor in spirit is not the blessing and it's not the prerequisite to receive a blessing. It's a manifestation or expression of one who recognizes her or his blessedness. It's the way we live when we already know and trust that we are blessed. And so it is with all the beatitudes.

When we know that we are blessed we live in a particular way and when we don't know or trust our blessedness we live in a different way. When I trust and live from my blessedness I'm able to respond to you in a different way, a better way, a deeper way, a more loving way. But when I forget, turn away from, deny, or don't recognize my blessedness, more often than not I betray myself and that usually means I will hurt you.

Are the beatitudes finding expression in your life today? I'm not asking that as a way telling you to go out and do those things. I'm really just asking if you see that you are already blessed. Because when we recognize and live from our blessedness the beatitudes follow naturally. We don't have to go out and do them. We can't help but do them. It's who we are at our best, at our deepest, and when we are most truly ourselves.

And if you're not seeing the beatitudes in your life, why not? What's getting in the way? What's keeping you from seeing your blessedness? And if you aren't seeing

it that doesn't mean you are not blessed. You are. It's the invitation to rediscover and reconnect with your blessedness. We've all been blessed. And some days we know it and trust it more than other days. What does it mean and look like for you today to reconnect to your blessedness?

When I know myself to be blessed I'm more fully myself. I'm more aware of and connected to others. My world is larger. My life seems to flow and feel more natural. And I don't have to prove myself, live up to another's expectations, or gain somebody's approval. I don't have to compare myself to or compete with others. It's enough to just be Blessed Mike and to express that blessedness in the truest most authentic way I can in that moment.

And you know where I learned that? I learned that just a few weeks ago during our trip to Egypt. I learned it from a little boy who was maybe ten or twelve years old.

We were riding in a horse drawn carriage through a local market area with all sorts of shops. It was clear that it was a market where the locals shopped because there weren't any other people looking like me except those going down the street in a horse drawn carriage.

We went by this one shop with racks of bread on the sidewalk. Some men were cooking and there was this kid helping. He was putting bread on the racks. As we passed by I took a picture and when I did that kid started chasing my horse drawn carriage. And I thought, "Ah shi\_\_oot. He doesn't like what I just did and something isn't right."

He ran and caught up to me. And then he reached out his hand and gave me a hot pita. It was the best pita I've ever tasted. And then he ran back to the shop. If you were to look at that place there is nothing about it that looked blessed. It was poor, and dirty, and make shift. But that kid, I think, knew his own blessedness and he couldn't do anything but share a pita. And he didn't do it to get something or to prove something. He did it because that's just who he is and he knows himself to be blessed.

Blessed are those who share their pita, for they are the bread of life.

What would it be like for you and me today to go share our pita? Not to prove something. And not to

get something. But to acknowledge something. What would it take and look like for us to simply say, "I'm blessed, here's my pita," and then go on about our lives?



*Originally published in Michael K. Marsh's blog, Interrupting the Silence, on January 30, 2023.*

*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.*

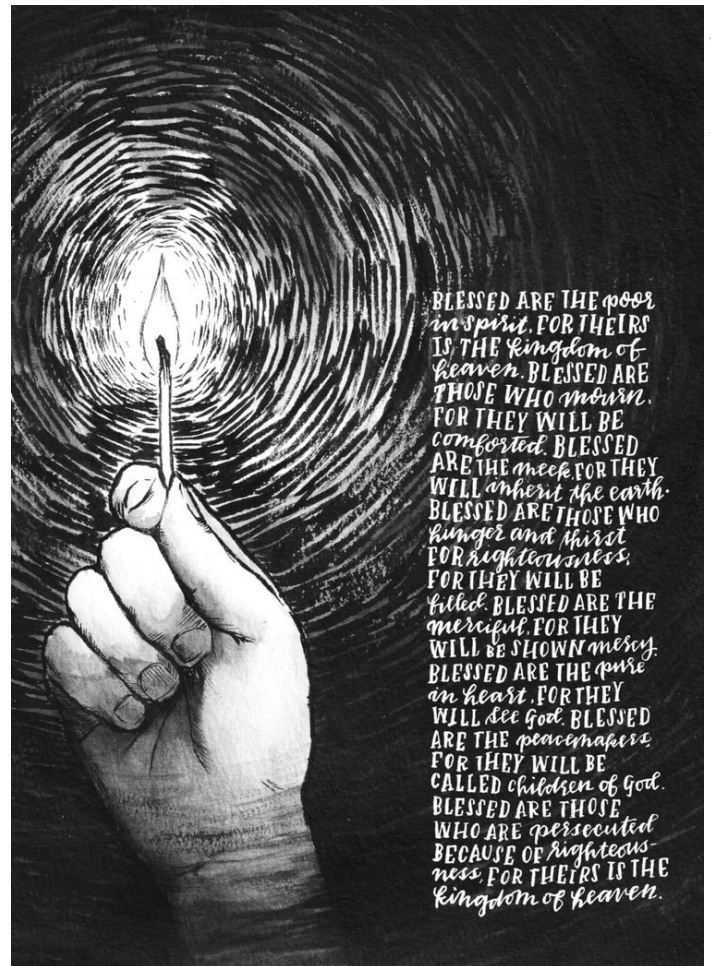


Image: Jillian Koye

# NEW BEATITUDES FOR A HURTING WORLD

BY NADIA BOLZ-WEBER

*Blessed are the agnostics.*

*Blessed are they who doubt,*

*those who aren't sure, those who can still be surprised.*

*Blessed are those who have nothing to offer.*

*Blessed are they for whom death is not an abstraction*

*Blessed are they who have buried their loved ones, for whom tears could fill an ocean.*

*Blessed are they who have loved enough to know what loss feels like.*

*Blessed are they who don't have the luxury of taking things for granted anymore.*

*Blessed are they who can't fall apart, because they have to keep it together for everyone else.*

*Blessed are those who still aren't over it yet.*

*Blessed are those who mourn.*

*Blessed are those who no one else notices, the kids who sit alone at middle school lunch tables, the laundry guys at the hospital, the sex workers, and the night-shift street sweepers.*

*Blessed are the forgotten,*

*blessed are the closeted,*

*blessed are the unemployed,*

*the unimpressive,*

*the underrepresented.*

*Blessed are the wrongly accused, the ones who never catch a break, the ones for whom life is hard, for Jesus chose to surround himself with people like them.*

*Blessed are those without documentation.*

*Blessed are the ones without lobbyists.*

*Blessed are those who make terrible business decisions for the sake of people.*

*Blessed are the burned-out social workers and the overworked teachers and the pro-bono case takers.*

*Blessed are the kindhearted NFL players and the fundraising trophy wives.*

*And blessed are the kids who step between the bullies and the weak.*

*Blessed is everyone who has ever forgiven me when I didn't deserve it.*

*Blessed are the merciful, for they totally get it.*

*You are of heaven, and Jesus blesses you.*

- Nadia Bolz-Weber  
July 2018



# SALTY: A SHORT SERMON FOR INSIDE A WOMEN'S PRISON

BY NADIA BOLZ-WEBER

The 12-step meeting I attended for years was next door to the Masterpiece Cake Shop - the one who went all the way to the US Supreme Court to seek "protection" from having to make a cake for a gay wedding.

One Saturday I was in a *mood*. When I saw that the prime parking spot in front of the bakery was open, I took it, shot a quick pic of me flipping off Masterpiece Cake Shop, posted it on Twitter and went to my meeting.

I mention this because when Jesus says things like, you are the salt of the earth and the light of the world, I think for sure he for sure doesn't mean me.

I mean, surely Jesus means people who don't have drinking problems and who never post angry pictures on-line of them making obscene gestures at bakeries and -fancying it to be "activism" - surely those who Jesus would call *the salt of the earth* and *the light of the world* are a superior class of people nothing like me. This is what I told myself as I was trying to figure out what I related to in our text for today.

So, curious to know more, I went into the Sermon on the Mount in the Gospel of Matthew to try and discover what I could about who this special class of awesome, salty, light bearing people were.

Ok, this is where I offer an installment of "Pastor Nadia's Nerdy History Of The Bible" - this week's topic is: Chapters and Verses.

While having the Bible broken into chapters and verses makes it easier to find things and reference them. The Bible didn't like, *come* with them . . . as a matter of fact, there actually were no chapter numbers in the Bible until the 13th century and there were no verse numbers until the 16th century. In other words, Jesus never like, sat down and divided his sermons into verses. So, this means that, believe it or not, you totally have permission to ignore chapters and verses - like, go for it. Those separations were added hundreds of years later. I mention this because when I defiantly ignored the arbitrary separation between the 4th and 5th chapters of Matthew, it totally changed everything



Image: Sermon on the Mount by Laura James | Vanderbilt Divinity Library

for me. Because honestly, some monk in the 13th century who was the guy who decided one day where Matthew chapter 4 ended, and where Matthew chapter 5 begins, is definitely not the boss of me.

I'll show you what I mean: Our reading today starts at the beginning of chapter 5 but the last verses of chapter 4 say this: *Jesus fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought to him all the sick, those who were afflicted with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, and paralytics, and he cured them. great crowds followed him from a bunch of places I can't pronounce.* (which is where chapter 4 ends which I'm sorry, but is stupid because the first verse of chapter 5 says) **When Jesus saw the crowds,** (when he saw the demoniacs and epileptics and people in pain) *he went*

*up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying*

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.”

See, here’s why sometimes it’s good to ignore the chapter and verse separations. Because it’s so easy for us to default to hearing Jesus’ Sermon On The Mount as pure *exhortation*. As though he is giving us a list of virtues we should try and adopt so that we too can be considered blessed – you know, be meeker, be poorer, and *mournier* and you too can meet the conditions of earning Jesus’ blessing. But the thing is, it’s hard to imagine Jesus exhorting a crowd of demoniacs and epileptics to be meeker. He wasn’t telling the sick and the lame what they should try and become, he was telling them you are blessed and you are the salt of the earth and you are the light of the world.

Which is why for years now, I’ve been convinced that the Sermon on the Mount is all about Jesus’ lavish blessing of the people around him on that hillside who his world—like ours—didn’t seem to have much time for: people in pain, people who work for peace instead of profit, people who exercise mercy instead of vengeance.

Maybe Jesus was simply blessing the ones around him that day who didn’t otherwise receive blessing, who had come to believe that, for them, blessings would never be in the cards.

What I am trying to say is that perhaps there *were* people in the crowd who totally had their crap together. People who had solid relationships and never had collection agencies calling them and always backed up their hard drives. People who only bought books at Lifeway and who didn’t have terrible secrets and who knew exactly what they were doing. I mean, of course *it’s possible* those people were in the crowd, it’s just . . . that’s not who we are *told* were coming to Jesus.

The ones we are *told* were coming to Jesus, the ones presumably to whom he was preaching, were described as the sick, those who were in pain, who fought with demons, who were broken and addicted

and late on their back taxes. Those who have more than one ex-wife, and who buy scratchers and think that maybe just a tiny bit of heroin might be a good idea. **In other words, the salt of the earth and the light of the world are just the people who happen to be standing in the need of God. And standing in the need of God is standing in the way of blessedness in a way that already having it all together never has been.**

These people, the wretched ones left behind in the last verses of chapter 4, they follow Jesus, in a way that the least, the last, the lost and the lonely have always followed him.

I thought that to be the light of the world, to let my light so shine before men, I have to be whole, and strong, and perfect. I’d have to be in that special class of people I’ll never belong to.

But when I listen closely, I realize that nowhere in the Sermon On The Mount does Jesus say “here are the conditions you must meet in order to be the salt of the Earth.” He does not say “here are the standards of wholeness you must fulfill in order to be light for the world”. No. He simply looks out into the crowd of people in pain, people who have been broken open – who bear those spiritual cracks that let in the light, who have the salt of sweat and tears on their broken bodies, and says YOU are salt. You. *You* are light. You have that of God within you - the God whose light scatters the darkness. Your imperfect and beautiful bodies are made of chemicals with holiness shimmering in then... you are made of dirt and the very breath of God.

So please, don’t wait until you *feel* as though you have met the conditions of being holy. Trust that Jesus knows what he is doing. You are already holy. Don’t try and be it. Know that you already are it. And then, for the love of God, take that seriously. The world needs it. You need it. This prison needs it.



*Originally published in Nadia Bolz-Weber's blog, The Corners, on September 5, 2022.*

*The Rev. Nadia Bolz-Weber is an ordained Lutheran Pastor, founder of House for All Sinners & Saints in Denver, CO and the author of three NYT bestselling memoirs.*

# PARISH RESOURCES

## Parish Office & Mailing Address

18 Belvidere Street, Boston, MA 02115  
Hours | Seven days a week, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.  
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  
*Rev. Mr. Christopher Brolly, SJ*, Deacon  
*Mark Donohoe*, Pastoral Associate  
*Robert Duff*, Director of Music  
*Anastasia Kolchanov*, Digital and Print Media Coordinator  
*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 Operations & 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  
*Ben Worthley*, Audio Engineer

## 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., and 6:00 p.m.  
Holy Days | 8:00 a.m.  
\* Please note that the 9:30 Mass is both in person and livestreamed.

## Sacrament of Reconciliation

Father Jim Shaughnessy, SJ is available by appointment for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. To schedule an appointment, please call the Parish Office. On all the Wednesday evenings of Lent, Mass is celebrated in the sanctuary at 6:00 and following Mass, Father Shaughnessy will hear confessions until 8:00—no appointment necessary.

## 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.

## Parking

There is discounted parking at The Hynes Auditorium Garage (located at 50 Dalton Street next to Bukowski's Tavern), for \$15, available on Sundays until 3:00 p.m., and \$15 after 4:00 every day of the week. To get this discount, ask a greeter for a chaser ticket at Mass or ask a staff person during the week. Chaser tickets must be used at the machine at the exit gate. To obtain the discount, place the ticket you received upon entering the garage into the machine, then follow it with the chaser ticket.

## Building Accessibility

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

## Faith Formation for Children

To register your child for Faith Formation, contact our Pastoral Director of Operations, Nicole Pascarelli O'Brien.

## Baptism for Infants

Infant baptism is celebrated on the first and third weekends of the month. For more information, please contact Mark Donohoe in the Parish Office.

## 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 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 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.

## Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA)

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. For more information, contact Mary Wessel 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.

## Joining Our Community

We're happy that you're with us! Our parish offers a warm, spiritual home for a diverse group of Catholics from many neighborhoods in and around Boston; we also have friends from around the country and the world. We invite local individuals and families to fill out a new parishioner form on our website. No matter your present status in the Catholic Church, current family or marital situation, gender or gender expression, sexual orientation, personal history, age, race, or self-image, you are invited and will be welcomed, accepted, loved, and respected here at Saint Cecilia. We are here to accompany and serve you.

## 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.