Fifth Sunday of Easter

15 May 2022

The 2022 First Communion Class with Fr. John Unni and Catechist Mark Lippolt
Saint Cecilia

PARISH

15 May 2022

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

PRELUDE | Violin Sonata: Minueto con sei variationi

Maxim Berezovsky
(1745-1777)

arranged by Marek Toporowski

ENTRANCE PROCESSION | Sing a New Church

NETTLETON

1. Sum-mon-ed by the God who made us Rich in
our di-ver-si-ty,
Je-sus, Rich-er still in u-ni-ty:
Let us bring the gifts that dif-fer And, in
splen-did, var-i-ed ways, Sing a new Church in-
be-ing, One in faith and love and praise.

2. Ra-diant ris-en from the wa-ter, Robed in
ho-li-ness and light,
Im-age, Male and fe-male, God’s de-light:
im-age, Male and fe-male, God’s de-light:
pro-mised, Sprung from seed of what has been.
pro-mised, Sprung from seed of what has been.

3. Trust the good-ness of cre-a-tion; Trust the
Spir-it strong with-in. Dare to dream the vi-sion
just-ice; Let it sound through time and space.
jus-tice; Let it sound through time and space.

4. Bring the hopes of ev-’ry na-tion; Bring the
art of ev-’ry race. Weave a song of peace and
wid-er And a peo-ple ev-er free.
art of ev-’ry race. Weave a song of peace and
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5. Draw to-geth-er at one ta-ble All the
hu-man fam-i-ly; Shape a cir-cle ev-er

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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.

SPRINKLING RITE | Come to the River

Bob Hurd

Refrain

Come, O come, come to the river
flowing from the body of Christ.
We’ll go down, deep in the water,
but in the Lord we shall arise.

Verses

1. Washed in waters of rebirth,
2. Priestly people are we,
3. Blest are those who thirst
4. Let us walk in the light
5. Those who sow in tears

1. we have put on Christ Jesus.
2. sealed and sent by the Spirit.
3. for the reign of God’s justice.
4. of God’s holy promise.
5. reap the harvest rejoicing.
GLORIA | Mass from Age to Age

Verse 1
1. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father.

Verse 2
2. Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us.

Verse 3
3. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

COLLECT
FIRST READING | Acts 14: 21-27

RESPONSORIAL PSALM | Psalm 145: I Will Praise Your Name

1. The Lord is kind and full of compassion, slow to anger, abounding in mercy. How good is the Lord to all, compassionate to all his creatures.

2. All your works shall thank you, O Lord, and all your faithful ones bless you. They shall speak of the glory of your reign, and declare your mighty deeds.

3. To make known your might to the children of men, and the glorious splendor of your reign. Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom; your rule endures for all generations.

SECOND READING | Revelation 21: 1-5a

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION | Franciscan Alleluia

GOSPEL | John 13: 31-33a, 34-35
Nicene Creed

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Universal Prayer
THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT OF THE PARISH!

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

Using the Flowcode with the camera on your smartphone is as easy as Aim & Tap. Aim your camera at the Flowcode image and tap the notification banner when it appears on your phone’s screen. You may need to zoom in a bit to focus on the code.

If the Flowcode doesn’t work for you, please visit www.flowcode.com/page/stceciliaboston.

You can also mail a check to:

Saint Cecilia Parish  
18 Belvidere Street  
Boston, MA 02115
LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

PRESENTATION OF THE GIFTS | As a Fire is Meant for Burning

EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

* The Lord be with you.
All: And with your spirit.
* Lift up your hearts.
All: We lift them up to the Lord.
* Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
All: It is right and just.
HOLY, HOLY | Missa Pacem

L. Randolph Babin

MEMORIAL ACCLAMATION | Missa Pacem

L. Randolph Babin

GREAT AMEN | Missa Pacem

L. Randolph Babin
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.

LAMB OF GOD | Missa Pacem

L. Randolph Babin

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

It is a long-held Catholic belief that when circumstances prevent one from receiving Holy Communion, it is possible to make an “Act of Spiritual Communion.” During this time when we are not able to celebrate the Eucharist together in person, Pope Francis invites Catholics to say this prayer as a source of grace. We can be assured that when we express our desire to receive Jesus in the Eucharist, God will be with us spiritually in a special way. Here is an Act of Spiritual Communion that we encourage you to pray as you participate in our live-streamed liturgies:

ACT OF SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

Loving Jesus, 
I believe that you 
are present in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist. 
I love you above all things, and I desire to receive you into my soul. 
Since I cannot at this moment receive you sacramentally, 
come at least spiritually into my heart. 
I embrace you as if you were already there and unite myself wholly to you. 
Never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.
Refrain

Take and eat; take and eat: this is my body
given up for you. Take and drink; take and drink:
this is my blood given up for you.

Verses

1. I am the Word that spoke and light was made;
2. I am the way that leads the exile home;
3. I am the Lamb that takes away your sin;
4. I am the corner stone that God has laid;
5. I am the light that came into the world;
6. I am the first and last, the Living One;

I am the seed that died to be born;
I am the truth that sets the captive free;
I am the gate that guards you night and day;
A chosen stone and precious in His eyes;
I am the Lord who died that you might live;

I am the bread that comes from heav’n above;
I am the life that raises up the dead;
You are my flock: you know the shepherd’s voice;
You are God’s dwelling place, on me you rest;
I am the morning star that never sets;
I am the bride-groom, this my wedding song;

D.C.

I am the vine that fills your cup with joy.
I am your peace, true peace my gift to you.
You are my own: your ransom is my blood.
Like living stones, a temple for God’s praise.
Lift up your face, in you my light will shine.
You are my bride, come to the marriage feast.

COMMUNION MEDITATION | Set Me as a Seal

Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm, for love is strong as death.
Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it.
CONCLUDING RITES

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

★ May almighty God bless you, the Father, (+) and the Son and the Holy Spirit.
All: Amen.

★ Go forth, the Mass is ended.
All: Thanks be to God.

RECESSIONAL | Joyful, Joyful We Adore You

HYMN TO JOY

1. Joy-ful, joy-ful, we ad-ore you, God of glo-ry,
2. All your works with joy sur-round you, Earth and heav’n re-
3. Al-ways giv-ing and for-giv-ing, Ev-er bless-ing,
4. Mor-tals, join the might-y cho-rus Which the morn-ing

1. Lord of love; Hearts un-fold like flow’rs be-fore you,
2. flect your rays, Stars and an-gels sing a-round you,
3. ev-er blest, Well-spring of the joy of liv-ing,
4. stars be-gan; Love di- vine is reign-ing o’er us,

1. O-p’ning to the sun a-bove, Melt the clouds of
2. Cen-ter of un-bro-ken praise; Field and for-est,
3. O-cean depth of hap-py rest! Lov-ing Fa-ther,
4. Bind-ing all with-in its span. Ev-er sing-ing,

1. sin and sad-ness; Drive the dark of doubt a-way;
2. vale and moun-tain, Flow’ry mead-ow, flash-ing sea,
3. Christ our broth-er, Let your light up-on us shine;
4. march we on-ward, Vic-tors in the midst of strife;

1. Giv-er of im-mor-tal glad-ness, Fill us with the light of day!
2. Chant-ing bird and flow-ing foun-tain, Prais-ing you e-ter-nal-ly!
3. Teach us how to love each oth-er, Lift us to the joy di-vine.
4. Joy-ful mu-sic leads us sun-ward, In the tri-umph song of life.

POSTLUDE | Sonata for Four Hands

Francis Poulenc
(1899-1963)
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, May 14 | 5:00 p.m.
Rev. Peter Grover, OMV, celebrant
Pat Scofield, lector

Sunday, May 15 | 8:00 a.m.
Rev. Jim Shaughnessy, SJ, celebrant
Bob Mann, lector

Sunday, May 15 | 9:30 a.m.
Rev. Peter Gyves, SJ, celebrant
Nicole Boyce, Ben DeWinter, and Catherine Horsley, lectors

Sunday, May 15 | 11:30 a.m.
Rev. Peter Gyves, SJ, celebrant
Virgen Palermo and Eileen Maguire, lectors

THIS SUNDAY’S READINGS
Acts 14:21-27
Revelation 21:1-5a
John 13:31-33a, 34-35

NEXT SUNDAY’S READINGS
Acts 15:1-2, 22-29
Revelation 21:10-14, 22-23
John 14:23-29

SPECIAL INTENTIONS

Saturday, May 14 | 5:00 p.m.
Bridie Maloney, Memorial

Sunday, May 15 | 8:00 a.m.
Edward S. Geier, Memorial
Daniel McLaughlin, 2nd Anniversary

Sunday, May 8 | 9:30 a.m.
Cecelia Dodson, Memorial
Thomas Largey, 10th Anniversary
Imoter Mnagerem, Special Intention
Angela Towle, Memorial
Helen Hanigan Kosuda, Memorial

Sunday, May 15 | 11:30 a.m.
Richard Howland, 7th Anniversary
Owen Daly, Special Intention
Conrad Kurth, Memorial

50 DAYS FOR OUR DELIGHT
This joyful Eastertide, join us for Evening Prayer.

Friday, April 29 @ 7:00 p.m.
Memorial of Saint Catherine of Siena

Tuesday, May 3 @ 7:00 p.m.
Feast of Saints Philip and James

Tuesday, May 10 @ 7:00 p.m.
Memorial of Saint Damian of Molokai

Tuesday, May 24 @ 7:00 p.m.
Sixth Week of Easter

Tuesday, May 31 @ 7:00 p.m.
Feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Join us live on the Saint Cecilia Facebook page or via Zoom. Liturgies last approximately half an hour.
Email sc.hoursandtaize@gmail.com for details.
PRAYERS & OCCASIONS

Our Sick
Please pray for all our sick and for those who are in need of our prayer, especially Charlie Naughton, Bob Haas, Bob Roppolo, Mary Walters, Marc Pelletier, Ray Cronin, Rosalind Sica, Liam Nedell, Rick Gaillardetz, Mary Kessler, Michael Mulrenan, Michele Maniscalco, and Nick Hungerford.

Welcome to Saint Cecilia Parish
We are pleased to welcome the following new members of our parish who have recently registered: Aimee Matos of Boston, Parker Olson of Boston, Jonathan Haspilaire of Boston, Mary Sanchez and Gail Ranshaw of Albuquerque, Sarah Reitnour of Boston, and Stefanie Rintoul of Boston. If you have not previously registered, you can do so online at www.stceciliaboston.org/joining-our-parish/.

Congratulations Graduates!
This weekend Cara Hackley graduated from the University of Rochester, and Ian Brostowski was awarded a BA in economics/Chinese studies from the University of Notre Dame. Well done, Cara and Ian!

For Students
Pray for all students as they enter into final exams: that God will give them strength and clarity of mind to manifest all that they have learned this year.

MOTHER’S DAY WALK THANK YOU!

Last Sunday, a small cadre of ten St. C's folks joined thousands of others in Roxbury and Dorchester to support the Louis D. Brown Peace Institute. With the generous support of parishioners, their families and friends, we far exceeded our $5,000 donation goal with total of $7,000 raised to support the family's of victims of gun violence. Learn more about the incredible work of the Peace Institute here: https://ldbpeaceinstitute.org/. Thank you to all who joined this meaningful effort!

VIRTUS TRAINING
TODAY, May 15 | 11:00 to 12:30 | Classroom 1

All volunteers are required by the Archdiocese to complete VIRTUS "Protecting God’s Children" (PCG) training. This is a one-time obligation, unlike the annual CORI process. Volunteers are defined as parishioners participating in ministries, serving on councils, and doing any type of volunteer work. If this is you and you have not done the training, or if you'd like to get involved with a ministry, you must complete it by Sunday, May 15, 11:00 a.m. If this date doesn't work for you, you may sign up for one of the diocesan courses at https://www.virtusonline.com/virtus/reg_list.cfm?theme=0, or save the date for the next Saint Cecilia training on September 18. No need to RSVP. Note: if you elect to wait until September, you cannot serve until then.

NOTES ON VOLUNTEER POLICY CHANGES IN THE ARCHDIOCESE OF BOSTON

The diocese has revamped the parish volunteer policy this year. Previously one needed to be CORI'd and receive VIRTUS training only if they had the potential to interact with children or those who are vulnerable, now ALL volunteers need to complete an annual CORI, and receive training (a one-time program) to serve in our community. The exceptions to this are the Parish Pastoral and Finance Councils, and ministries that meet exclusively online—who must complete a CORI, but do not need to receive training until they plan to return in-person. Our deadline to submit a list of all active volunteers (with completed training and CORI) is June. Please speak to your ministry coordinators or staff liaison if you've not yet heard about how to do this. Failure to complete these two steps will mean one must take a hiatus from serving until completed. This process is not insignificant, and we greatly appreciate your time and commitment to keeping children safe in this community.
NIGHT OF WORSHIP
Tuesday, May 17 | 7:00–8:00 p.m. | Church & Zoom

Join us in church this Tuesday evening for adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, as we thank God for the wonderful things he has done and continues to do in our lives. In addition to reciting the rosary, there will be periods of quiet prayer and song. We are always looking for musicians to join our music team. Rehearsals occur monthly, two weeks prior to Adoration. If you would like more information about joining the music team or if you have a song request, please email Perpetual Charles (pcharles0615@gmail.com). This will also be shared on Zoom. Please contact Perpetua for the link.

WHAT IS THE PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL?

The purpose of the Saint Cecilia Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) is to assist the pastor in his leadership role of planning, organizing, initiating, promoting, coordinating, and reviewing the evangelization, worship, religious education, and service activities within the parish. In an effort to support the pastor, the PPC will be called upon to serve in a variety of ways depending on the specific needs of the pastor and our church community.

Such service will include the following components:

• Serve as advisors to the pastor and parish staff. Each PPC member brings a unique perspective to the council meetings. These perspectives are highly valued and input provided during discussion is considered when making pastoral decisions. Such perspectives are not specifically personal in nature, but will require members of the PPC to do the following:
  • Investigate: Consult with parishioners and experts, consider options and costs
  • Reflect: Consider and organize information gathered
  • Recommend: Form a conclusion and offer to the pastor in form of recommendations which may or may not be implemented

• Serve as representatives of the church community, supporting the pastor and staff in their efforts in realizing the mission and vision of the church. Members of the PPC are expected to participate in a variety of events, such as New Parishioner Receptions, to develop and maintain relationships with fellow parishioners.

• Stay up-to-date with parish-wide initiatives (staff updates via email and at PPC meetings)

Depending of the specific needs of Saint Cecilia, the PPC might also be called upon to participate in the following activities:

• Work closely with parish staff to design and lead “working groups” to address parish specific needs. Past initiatives have included the marriage ministry, the ministry fair, and the radical welcome workshop.

• Convene outside of regularly scheduled meetings to follow up with working group activities.

• Write updates for the Parish Bulletin.

WISDOM AND MATURE SPIRITUALITY

The Wisdom and Mature Spirituality Group meets weekly. Starting in May, we will meet in person from 10:00–11:00 a.m. on the first Sunday of the month. Please RSVP for the location and more info going forward. On the other three weeks of the month, we will continue to meet on Zoom from 8:30–9:30 a.m. Anyone who is in the second half of life is welcome to join. The next book for the Zoom group is The Meaning of Mary Magdalene by Cynthia Bourgeault of The Center for Action and Contemplation. To RSVP please email Deb Garcia at sc.wisdomandmaturespirituality@gmail.com.

HUNGER & HOMELESSNESS MINISTRY: DRIVERS NEEDED

Each weekend parishioners have the opportunity to pick up donated meat, dairy products, prepared foods, and produce from four local supermarkets and deliver it to either Catholic Charities’ Haitian Multi-Service Center in Dorchester or the Huntington Y’s “Families in Transition” program. This vital ministry takes place at 8:00 every Saturday and Sunday morning and on Sundays can be completed in time to watch the livestreamed 9:30 a.m. Mass. We need drivers for all the Saturdays and Sundays in May and June. Please email Mark.Lippolt@gmail.com if you can help out.
PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS — JUST 3 WEEKS AWAY!

This year, the Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) election will be held on the weekend of June 4/5. There are three seats to be filled, each for a 3-year term. This is an exciting and critical time for our parish and serving on the Parish Pastoral Council is a significant way of contributing to our vibrancy and growth. Please take the time to vote, and if you feel inspired, consider running for one of the open seats.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO RUN FOR MEMBERSHIP ON THE PARISH COUNCIL?

I. You must be a registered member of our community and at least eighteen years old. You can register by visiting our website at www.stceciliaboston.org/regform.html or by filling out a registration form in the narthex.

II. You should already be an active participant in the life of the parish, whether that’s in-person or virtual.

WHAT IS THE LEVEL OF COMMITMENT AND RESPONSIBILITY?

Meetings are held monthly via Zoom on the second Wednesday of the month from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. In addition to monthly meetings, members are expected to volunteer to lead or assist with occasional parish initiatives or activities. It is also expected that council members will participate in a variety of parish events and programs and be visible representatives of the parish community.

HOW CAN I BECOME A CANDIDATE?

Please prepare a brief statement (no longer than 150 words) about why you are interested, what Saint Cecilia Parish means to you, and any information about yourself that you would like to share. This statement will be included in the bulletins for May 22, 29, and June 5. A headshot is also requested but is not required.

Elections will be held on the weekend of June 4/5. If you cannot be present that weekend, you may submit your vote via e-mail at info@stceciliaboston.org until 1:00 p.m. on Sunday, June 5.

SCHEDULE

May 16 | Statements and headshots due to info@stceciliaboston.org
May 21/22 & 28/29 & June 4/5 | Biographies, platform statements, and headshots published in the parish bulletin
June 4/5 | Election
June 5 | Absentee ballots due no later than 1:00 p.m. via e-mail

CURRENT PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERS

Given the uncertainty of the pandemic, we extended the terms of the current members by 2 years in lieu of having elections while we gathered virtually.

MEMBERS WHOSE TERMS EXPIRE MAY 2022
Kathryn Brown
Natasha Hartmann
Chika Offurum

MEMBERS WHOSE TERMS EXPIRE MAY 2023
Carly Caminiti
Nancy Nee Hanifin
Amy Paulin
Mark Horan

MEMBERS WHOSE TERMS EXPIRE IN MAY 2024
Matt Cannistraro
Anna DeMare
Mark Lippolt

Completed materials or any questions can be sent to info@stceciliaboston.org.
Church leaders often wring their hands over fear that withholding public condemnation of individuals about sexuality, politics, Communion or some other issue could be the potential source of "scandal" to the faithful. Yet many young adults, affiliated and disaffiliated Catholics alike, regularly point to such condemnations — particularly when they target the most vulnerable and marginalized — as the real stumbling block to faith in general and religious affiliation in particular.

The 2018 pre-synodal meeting of young adults from around the world bears witness to this truth. The final document, composed by the young adults themselves at the invitation of Pope Francis for the Synod of Bishops on young people, says: "Lots of young people, having lost trust in institutions, have become disaffiliated with organized religion and would not see themselves as 'religious.' However, young people are open to the spiritual."

They add, "Scandals attributed to the Church — both real and perceived — affect the confidence of young people in the Church and in the traditional institutions for which she stands."

For at least the last four years since this document was published, and perhaps even longer, I have been thinking about the expression "spiritual but not religious." Part of this has to do with my identity as a pastoral minister, a Franciscan friar and Catholic priest. In that capacity, I was initially inclined like many other ordained and lay ministers committed to serving the church to be pessimistic and see such phrases as 'religious.' However, young people are open to the spiritual."

I admit that it worried me a little and it appeared to be a sign that an increasing number of people — especially young people — were rejecting a tradition and institution I cared about so deeply.

At the same time, I was also looking at the sociological reports and the self-identification of increasing numbers of people through the lens of a theologian and scholar of spirituality. And the combination of my professional scholarly assessment and pastoral ministry with young people began leading me toward a much different, even more optimistic perspective.

For too long, pastors and parents have dwelt on the ostensible rejection of "the religious," that second part of the self-identifying phrase, which portends bad things for traditional institutions of religious belonging. To many people, it is seen as the only important data point in the phrase, overshadowing what is, in my estimation, much more significant.

What if we focused first on the embrace of one's identity as "spiritual"?

What if our starting point in thinking about what it means to be a person in communion with God, oneself and the world was not reduced to external expressions of institutional belonging, but instead began with attention to humans' inherent capacity for God?

I am reminded of something Missionary Oblate of Mary Immaculate Fr. Ronald Rolheiser says early in his best-selling book The Holy Longing: The Search for a Christian Spirituality: "Spirituality is not something on the fringes, an option for those with a particular bent. None of us has a choice. Everyone has to have a spirituality and everyone does have one, either a life-giving one or a destructive one."

In the tradition of St. Augustine of Hippo, Rolheiser goes on to say correctly that spirituality is another way of describing the intrinsic desire or passion we have been created with for the divine. Rolheiser adds:

Hence, spirituality is not about serenely picking or rationally choosing certain spiritual activities like going to church, praying or meditating, reading spiritual books, or setting off on some explicit spiritual quest. It is far more basic than that. Long before we do anything religious at all, we have to do something about the fire that burns within us. What we do with that fire, how we channel it, is our spirituality.

All humans have a yearning for relationship with God, but not...
everyone finds that traditional forms of institutional belonging supports, deepens or sustains a spiritual life of prayer and action in keeping with God's revelation in Jesus Christ. Sadly, infuriatingly even, sometimes the institution — and those members and leaders who identify with it — actually creates impediments to authentic living of faith and relationship with God.

This shouldn't be that shocking, since the Gospels are replete with precisely this counterintuitive dynamic at play during Jesus' own earthly ministry. The No. 1 obstacle to the relationship between those in Jesus' time and Jesus himself is actually his disciples! They bicker about who among themselves is most important (e.g., Matthew 18:1-5; Mark 9:33-37; Luke 9:46-48), they try to shut down those ministering in Jesus' name but without their permission (e.g., Mark 9:38-41; Luke 9:49-50), they try to send crowds away from Jesus rather than provide for the people (e.g., Matthew 14:15-16; Mark 6:35-37; Luke 9:12-13), and they seek to prevent parents from bringing their children to Jesus (e.g., Matthew 19:13-15; Mark 10:13-16; Luke 18:15-17).

I am, therefore, not the least surprised that many people, especially young adults, find that church leaders appear far more interested in embracing culture warrior identities and dedicating time to which political opponents they wish to condemn rather than embracing the most marginalized and oppressed in our communities. Such church leaders indeed appear to be the successors of the apostles, but mostly in terms of the apostles' efforts to make themselves the most important and prevent others from relationship with Jesus.

This, for young adults, is an obstacle, a stumbling block, a scandal that prevents them from being a "religious" person.

And yet, so many of the same spiritual seekers continue to recognize a holy longing within them. God continues to draw near to them and invite them into relationship. The problem is that, as the young adults in 2018 state in their document, many of the religiously disaffiliated then struggle today to find language and sources for meaning-making to interpret their spiritual lives in a context where the traditional institutions no longer suffice.

As I wrote in an academic article last year, I still have hope that Catholicism generally and the various spiritual traditions within it (such as the Franciscan tradition) can offer resources for meaning-making and religious belonging for contemporary women and men. That so many young adults continue to recognize a spiritual dimension in their lives is a hopeful sign that they are also seeking the language and frameworks that religious traditions can provide.

But to get there, we have to address the real scandals of contemporary religious institutions, including the failure to fully acknowledge, reckon with and take responsibility for sexual abuse and its cover-up; inadequate respect for and opportunities open to women in church leadership and ministry; discrimination against LGBTQ persons; insufficient resources and attention paid to urgent ethical crises in society beyond abortion (such as the plight of immigrants and refugees, income inequality, global climate change and others); and, as the young people in 2018 make clear, the absence of paths for young adults to take on leadership roles in the church and be accompanied by mentors in faith and ministry who treat them like the adults they are.

So perhaps the expression "I am spiritual, but not religious" is neither as threatening nor as bad as many people think it is. In fact, it may be a great sign of possibility and hope.

The key will be for those in leadership positions of the church to recognize the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of these spiritual seekers, hear them, learn from them, meet them where they are and walk together with them in the spirit of accompaniment God is calling the church to live. Maybe then, embracing the "religious" part won't seem like such a challenge for the next generation.

~Franciscan Fr. Daniel P. Horan is the director of the Center for Spirituality and professor of philosophy, religious studies and theology at Saint Mary's College in Notre Dame, Indiana.

DONATIONS FOR CATHOLIC CHARITIES' FOOD PANTRY

Saint Cecilia has committed to providing these items to the Catholic Charities' food pantry: Cheerios or corn flakes, peanut butter, white flour pasta, spaghetti, macaroni and cheese, canned tuna fish, canned chicken breast, cooking oil, and tomato sauce. While any canned or shelf-stable items are appreciated, it is particularly helpful when parishioners can help with the staples listed above. Because food is delivered only twice a month to the Catholic Charities' food pantry, we cannot accept donations of baked items or produce in the narthex. If you would like to send food donations directly to Catholic Charities through a service like Amazon.com, please have them delivered to:

Beth Chambers
Catholic Charities
185 Columbia Road
Boston, MA 02121
PARISH RESOURCES

Parish Office & Mailing Address
18 Belvidere Street, Boston, MA 02115
Hours | Monday-Friday: 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. & by Appointment
Phone | 617 536 4548; Fax | 617 536 1781
E-mail | info@stceciliaboston.org
Website | www.stceciliaboston.org

Parish Staff
Rev. John J. Unni, Pastor
Rev. James Shaughnessy, SJ, Pastoral Support
Rev. Mr. David A. Kibling, SJ, Deacon
Keith Brinkley, Mike Currier, Rudy Flores, Parker Olson,
Corey Ortiz, Reception
Leah Bennett, Communications and Operations Manager,
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Thomas Mellan, Organist,
tmellan@stceciliaboston.org
Lisa Pickering, Director of Facilities and Events,
lpickering@stceciliaboston.org

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

Schedule for Liturgy
Wednesday, Thursday, & Friday | 8:00 a.m.
Lord’s Day | Sat 5:00 p.m.; Sun 8:00, 9:30*, 11:30 a.m
Holy Days | 8:00 a.m.
* Please note that the 9:30 Mass is both in-person and livestreamed.

Baptism for Infants
Infant baptism is celebrated on the first Sunday of the month. For more information, please contact Mark Donohoe in the Parish Office.

Faith Formation for Children
To register your child for our Faith Formation Program, please contact Scott MacDonald in the Parish Office.

Marriage
Couples who wish to prepare for marriage should contact Mark Donohoe in the Parish Office at least six months in advance.

Order of Christian Funerals
The parish is prepared to celebrate the Vigil (wake) in the church. Please contact the Parish Office for more information.

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)
The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults is the communal process through which non-baptized men and women become members of the Catholic Church. It is also suitable for those baptized in different faith traditions who are interested in becoming Catholic, or, for those who were baptized Catholic, but have yet to receive the sacraments of Eucharist and confirmation.

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.

Child Abuse Prevention (CAP) Team
The CAP Team is responsible for training all parish staff and volunteers in mandated reporting laws and the Protecting God’s Children program (VIRTUS). They also provide consultation and support to anyone in the parish who has concerns about reporting child abuse and neglect. Please contact Lois Flaherty (loisflaherty@gmail.com), Maria Roche (maria.roche15@gmail.com), Letitia Howland (l_howland@hotmail.com), or Erin Young (erin.t.young@gmail.com) if you have any questions or concerns.

For Those with Celiac Disease
If you have celiac disease, please let us know. We have a supply of low-gluten altar bread available for those who cannot tolerate gluten.

Hearing Assistance in Church
The church is equipped with an assistive listening system. If you would like to use one of the small receivers, please ask one of our greeters.

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

Parking
There is discounted parking at The Hynes Auditorium Garage (located at 50 Dalton Street next to Bukowski’s Tavern), for $11, available on Sundays until 3:00 p.m., and $14 after 4:00 every day of the week. To take advantage of this discount, ask one of our greeters for a chaser ticket at Mass or ask a staff person during the week. Chaser tickets must be used at the machine at the exit gate. To obtain the discount, first place the ticket you received upon entering the garage into the machine, then follow it with the chaser ticket.

Joining Our Community
We’re happy that you’re with us! Our community offers a warm, spiritual home for a diverse group of Catholics. We come from many neighborhoods in and around Boston, but also have long distance parishioners from around the country and around the world. If you are local, please introduce yourself to a staff member or drop in for coffee on Sunday. We invite both local and long distance individuals and families to fill out a new parisheson form on our website. No matter what your background or location, please know that you are always welcome at Saint Cecilia.
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