

# Saint Cecilia

P A R I S H



## The Seventh Sunday of Easter

21 May 2023

Our 2023 First Holy Communion Class, Photographed by Cheryl Richards

# Saint Cecilia

P A R I S H

21 MAY 2023

## SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

ENTRANCE PROCESSION | Come Down, O Love Divine

DOWN AMPNEY

1. Come down, O Love di - vine, Seek now this soul of  
2. O let it free - ly burn, Till earth - ly pas - sions  
3. And so the yearn - ing strong, With which the soul will

mine, And vis - it it with your own ar - dor glow - ing;  
turn To dust and ash - es in its heat con - sum - ing;  
long, Shall far out-pass the pow'r of hu - man tell - ing;

O Com - fort - er, draw near, With - in my heart ap -  
And let your glo - rious light Shine ev - er on my  
No soul can guess Love's grace Till it be - come the

pear, And kin - dle it, your ho - ly flame be - stow - ing.  
sight, And clothe me round, the while my path il - lum - ing.  
place Where - in the Ho - ly Spir - it makes a dwell - ing.

## CALL TO WORSHIP

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

All: Amen.

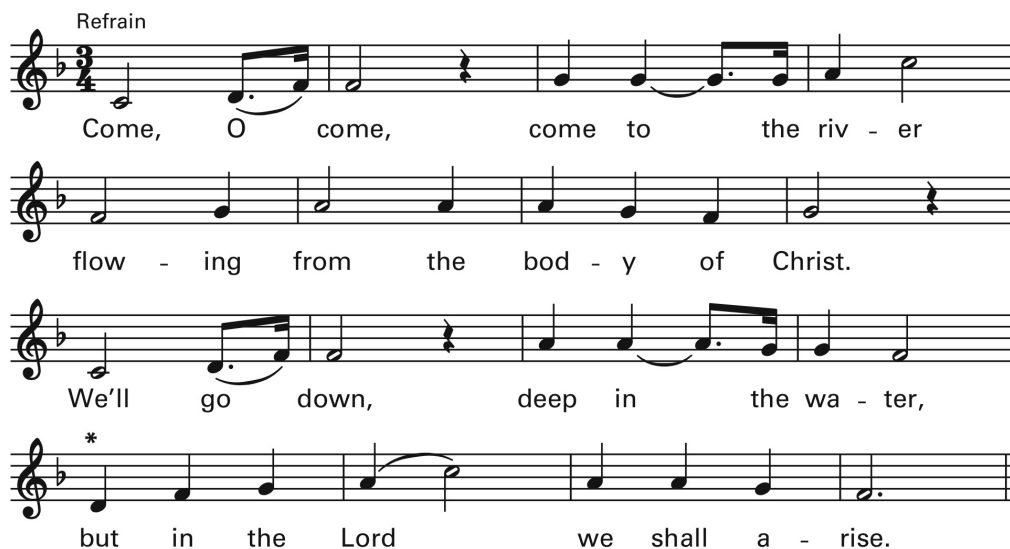
✠ The Lord be with you.

All: And with your spirit.

## SPRINKLING RITE | Come to the River

Bob Hurd

Refrain



Come, O come, come to the riv - er  
flow - ing from the bod - y of Christ.  
We'll go down, deep in the wa - ter,  
\* but in the Lord we shall a - rise.

Verses



1. Washed in wa - ters of re-birth,  
2. Priest - ly peo - ple are \_\_\_\_ we,  
3. Blest are those \_\_\_\_ who \_\_\_\_ thirst  
4. Let us walk \_\_\_\_ in the light  
5. Those who sow \_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_ tears

to Refrain

1. we have put on Christ Je - sus.  
2. sealed and sent by the Spir - it.  
3. for the reign of God's jus - tice.  
4. of God's ho - ly prom - ise.  
5. reap the har - vest re - joic - ing.

Glo - ry, glo-ry to God, glo-ry to God in the high - est,  
 glo - ry, glo-ry to God, and on earth peace to peo - ple,  
 peo - ple of good will. and on earth  
 peace to peo - ple, peo - ple of good will.

*To verses* *Last time*

## 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 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

*Cantor:* *Cantor:* *Assembly:* *Cantor:*





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.

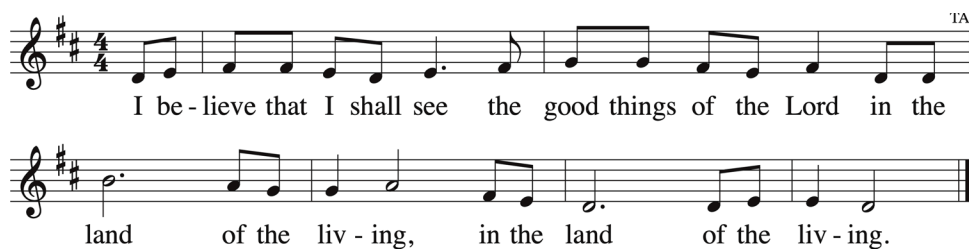
COLLECT

## LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING | Acts 1: 12-14

RESPONSORIAL PSALM | Ps. 27: I Believe I Shall See

Tony Alonso



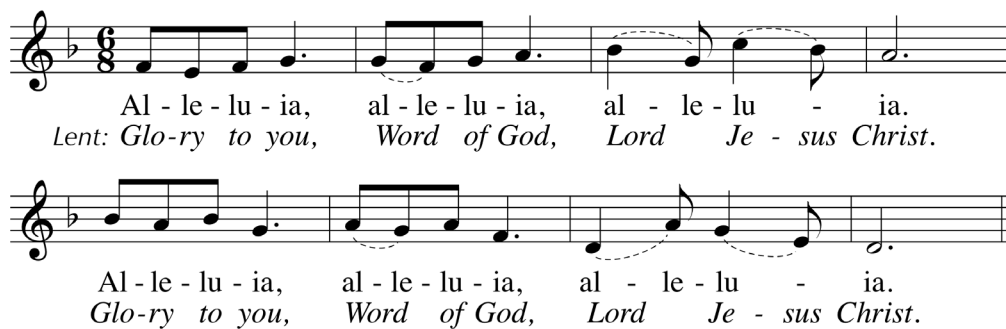
The LORD is my light and my salvation;  
 whom shall I fear?  
 The LORD is the stronghold of my life;  
 whom should I dread? *R.*

There is one thing I ask of the LORD,  
 only this do I seek:  
 to live in the house of the LORD

all the days of my life,  
 to gaze on the beauty of the LORD,  
 to inquire at his temple. *R.*

O LORD, hear my voice when I call;  
 have mercy and answer me.  
 Of you my heart has spoken,  
 "Seek his face." *R.*

SECOND READING | 1 Peter 4: 13-16



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.  
*Lent: Glo-ry to you, Word of God, Lord Je - sus Christ.*

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.  
*Glo-ry to you, Word of God, Lord Je - sus Christ.*

GOSPEL | John 17: 1-11a

HOMILY

NICENE CREED

UNIVERSAL PRAYERS

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT OF THE PARISH!

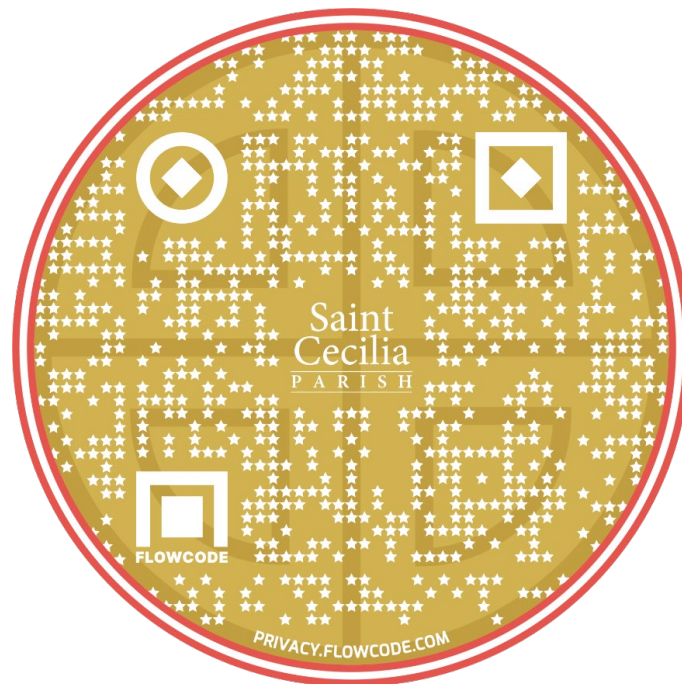
We are grateful for your ongoing support of Saint Cecilia. The easiest way to make a financial contribution to our parish is to use the parish Flowcode below.

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

PRESENTATION OF THE GIFTS | Be Not Afraid

Bob Dufford



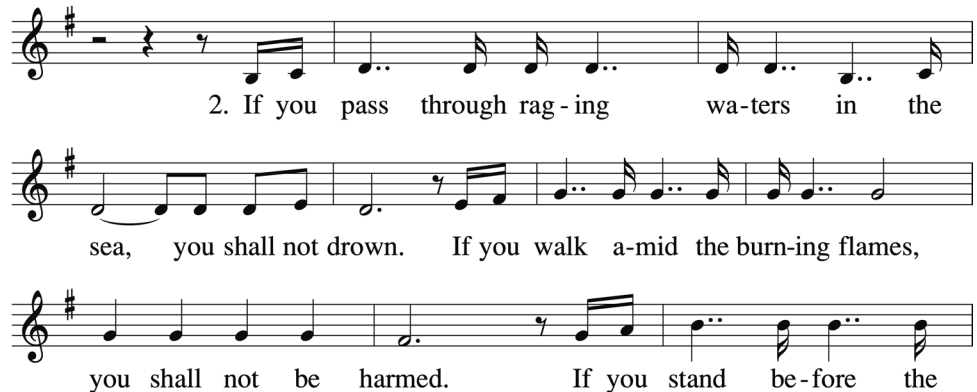
1. You shall cross the bar-ren des-ert, but you  
shall not die of thirst. You shall wan-der far in  
safe-ty though you do not know the way. You shall  
speak your words in for-eign lands and all will un-der-  
stand. You shall see the face of God and live.

Refrain

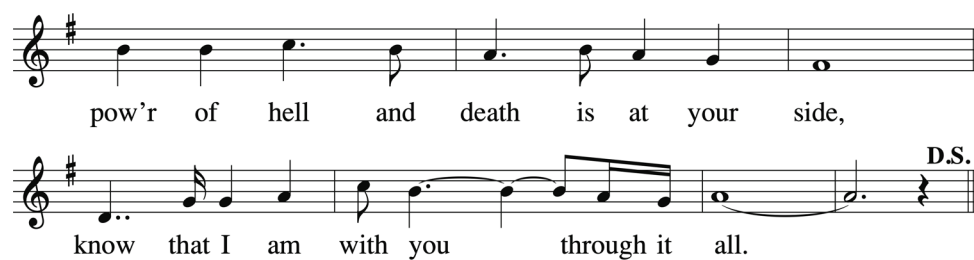


Be not a-fraid. I go be-fore you al-ways.  
Come, fol-low me, and I will give you rest.

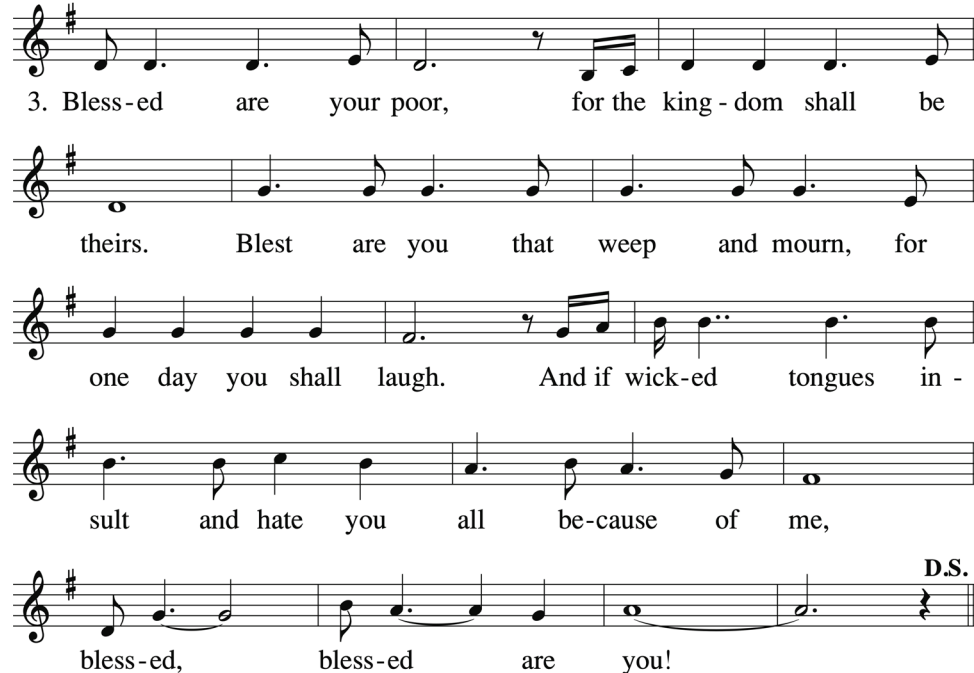
Verse 2



2. If you pass through rag-ing wa-ters in the  
sea, you shall not drown. If you walk a-mid the burn-ing flames,  
you shall not be harmed. If you stand be-fore the



Verse 3



EUCCHARISTIC 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.



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and  
might, heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -  
san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the  
high - est. Ho - san - na, ho - san - na, ho -  
san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes in the  
name of the Lord. Ho - san - na, ho -  
san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est. Ho -  
san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

## MEMORIAL ACCLAMATION | Mass of the Angels and Saints

Steven R. Janco

Dy - ing you de - stroyed our death, ris - ing you re - stored our life.  
Lord Je - sus, come in glo - ry. Lord Je - sus, come in glo - ry.

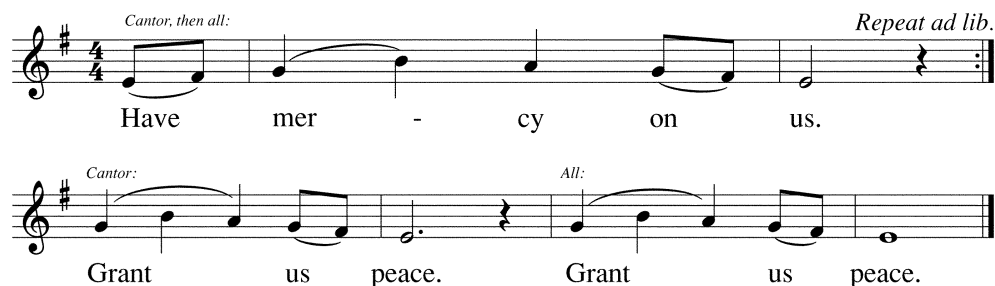


## THE LORD'S PRAYER

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 | Mass of the Angels and Saints

Steven R. Janco



## 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.



1. All who hun-ger, gath - er glad - ly; Ho - ly man - na  
 2. All who hun-ger, nev - er stran-gers; Seek-er, be a  
 3. All who hun-ger, sing to-geth - er; Je - sus Christ is



is our bread. Come from wil - der - ness and wan-d'ring.  
 wel - come guest. Come from rest - less - ness and roam - ing.  
 liv - ing bread. Come from lone - li - ness and long - ing.



Here, in truth, we will be fed. You that yearn for  
 Here, in joy, we keep the feast. We that once were  
 Here, in peace, we have been led. Blest are those who



days of full - ness, All a - round us is our food.  
 lost and scat - tered In com - mun-ion's love have stood.  
 from this ta - ble Live their days in grat - i - tude.

## Refrain



Taste and see the grace e - ter - nal. Taste and see that God is good.

The Lord bless you and keep you  
 The Lord make his face to shine upon you  
 To shine upon you and be gracious  
 And be gracious, unto you  
 The Lord lift up the light  
 Of his countenance upon you  
 And give you peace  
 Amen.

## 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 | Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

HYFRYDOL

1. Love di - vine, all loves ex - cel - ling, Joy of  
2. Come, Al - might - y, to de - liv - er, Let us  
3. Fin - ish then your new cre - a - tion, Pure and

heav'n, to earth come down! Fix in us your  
all your life re - ceive; Sud - den - ly re -  
spot - less, gra - cious Lord. Let us see your

hum - ble dwell - ing, All your faith - ful mer - cies  
turn and nev - er, Nev - er - more your tem - ples  
great sal - va - tion Per - fect - ly in you re -

crown. Je - sus, source of all com - pas - sion, Love un -  
leave. You we would be al - ways bless - ing, Serve you  
stored. Changed from glo - ry in - to glo - ry, Till in

bound - ed, love all pure; Vis - it us with  
as your hosts a - bove, Pray, and praise you  
heav'n we take our place, Till we sing be -

your sal - va - tion, Let your love in us en - dure.  
with - out ceas - ing, Glo - ry in your pre - cious love.  
fore the Al - might - y, Lost in won - der, love, and praise.

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

For information on becoming involved or supporting the music program at Saint Cecilia,  
please contact Dr. Robert Duff at 617-536-4548 or email: [RDuff@stceciliaboston.org](mailto:RDuff@stceciliaboston.org).



# WELCOME!

Welcome to Saint Cecilia Parish, a Roman Catholic community that gathers day by day, week by week, to know and make known the grace of God. By means of this abundant grace, we enjoy a diverse and close-knit parish family—young, old, rich, poor, of various ethnic origins and differing backgrounds. From our extraordinary music program to a growing children's faith formation program; from the various liturgical ministries to the many opportunities for social outreach that the parish provides, Saint Cecilia is a vibrant community of faith, centered on prayer and worship that tries to keep the Gospel close to heart and to live by Jesus' teachings.

Saint Cecilia Parish was established in 1888. At that time the Back Bay section of Boston along Commonwealth Avenue and Beacon Street was the residential section of the Yankee aristocracy. The maids ("Irish working out girls") and coachmen who served these residents had long requested a church of their own. When Archbishop Williams granted their request and carved the parish from the territory of the Cathedral, they built a magnificent church out of their meager earnings. Our church building resides on the ancestral homeland of the Pawtucket and Massachusetts tribal nations.

The church was dedicated on April 22, 1894. Its architecture is Romanesque, XII Century Norman. The main altar, notable for its massive simplicity, was carved from a single block of white Carrara marble. The painting in the center reredos is a reproduction of da Vinci's The Last Supper, and the dome above is an array of 24K gold rosettes.

For the sixtieth anniversary celebration in 1954, a massive renovation project was undertaken. During this renovation, a statue of Pope Saint Pius X (canonized that same year) was imported from Italy and placed on the right side of the sanctuary. Above the statue are paintings from Pius' life. On the left side is a statue of Saint Patrick, principal patron of the Archdiocese of Boston, and above it are three scenes from his life.

Fourteen circular and sixteen square panels adorn the nave and arches of the church. The square panels are decorated with the symbols of Our Lady taken from the Litany of Loreto and the circular ones with symbols taken from the lives of the apostles. The great window of the Assumption—framed by the two oak cases of the organ—was installed in 1954 (the Marian Year) in spaces originally designed for windows but not until then used.

The original organ of 24 stops was built in 1902 by the Hutchings-Votey Organ Company, Opus 1465, and was rebuilt in 1954 with 32 stops. In 1998, Timothy Smith and Theodore Gilbert began a massive reconstruction of the organ. The current Smith & Gilbert Organ of 4 manuals, 54 ranks, and 3,084 pipes was dedicated on the Feast of Saint Cecilia, November 22, 1999.

Today we are experiencing something of an awakening within these old walls. Our numbers are increasing by 350 new households each year, and we continue to grow in our commitment to issues of peace, justice, and service to our neighbors, both near and far.

We've been right here on Belvidere Street, in the same building for over 125 years, but that does not mean that life here is stale, stagnant, or even predictable. We are proud to be entrusted with the legacy of Saint Cecilia Parish, where everything is the same, yet always changing; where we honor tradition while embracing the future; where God's love makes all things new.

# OUR COMMUNITY NEWS



## MINISTERS OF THE LITURGY

**Saturday, May 20 | 5:00 p.m.**

Rev. James Shaughnessy, SJ, celebrant  
Pat Scofield, lector

**Sunday, May 21 | 8:00 a.m.**

Rev. James Shaughnessy, SJ, celebrant  
Jordan Barnes, lector

**Sunday, May 21 | 9:30 a.m.**

Rev. Peter Gyves, SJ, celebrant  
Michael Lake, Letitia Howland, and Rosaria Salerno, lectors

**Sunday, May 21 | 11:30 a.m.**

Rev. Peter Gyves, SJ, celebrant  
Thomas O'Brien, Ngozi Udeh, and Karen McMenamy, lectors

## SPECIAL INTENTIONS

**Sunday, May 21 | 9:30 a.m.**

Frederick Mason, *3rd Anniversary*  
Emmanuel M. Yovino, M.D., *60th Anniversary*  
Robert Dsilva, *Anniversary*  
Julie Dsilva, *Anniversary*  
Cyril Fernandes, *Anniversary*  
Adam Paone, *Memorial*  
Robert Breen, *Memorial*  
Bill and Mary Barry, *Memorial*

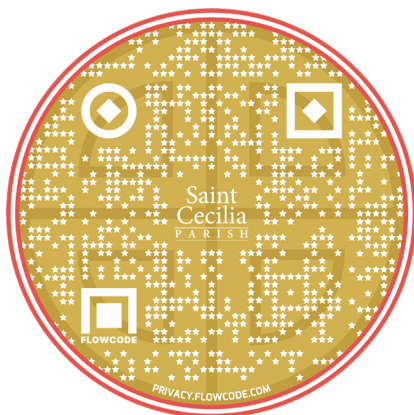
## TODAY'S READINGS

Acts 1:12-14  
1 Peter 4:13-16  
John 17:1-11a

## NEXT SUNDAY'S READINGS

Acts 2:1-11  
1 Corinthians 12:3b-7, 12-13  
John 20:19-23

SCAN THIS CODE  
FOR OFFERTORY GIVING.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS  
SUPPORT OF SAINT CECILIA PARISH!



# PRAYERS & OCCASIONS



## Our Sick

Please pray for all our sick and for those who are in need of our prayer, especially **Anastaja Lee, Sue Ryan, Necee Regis, Tim Finn, Glenn Gallo, Carol Tebo, John Hosang, Mary Walters, Marc Pelletier, Ray Cronin, Rick Gaillardetz, Michele Maniscalco, Nick Hungerford, and Fred Tufts.**

## Welcome to Saint Cecilia Parish

We are pleased to welcome the following newly-registered members of our parish: **Wendy Reilly Harris** of Brookline and **Kate Strauchon** of Boston. If you have not previously registered you can do so online at [www.stceciliaboston.org](http://www.stceciliaboston.org).

## Looking for Teachers

Are you interested in volunteering for our Faith Formation program during the 2023-2024 school year? We are looking for a group of adults who are interested in helping grow our faith formation program in a variety of roles. No teaching experience is required. If you have any interest, please email our Children's Faith Formation Coordinator, Olivia Hastie, at [ohastie@stceciliaboston.org](mailto:ohastie@stceciliaboston.org).

## Attention, Graduates!

We want to acknowledge and celebrate all our graduates this spring. Please email the names of the parishoners who are graduating from high school or college to Christine Burns at [cburns@stceciliaboston.org](mailto:cburns@stceciliaboston.org) and use the word "graduate" in the subject line. Feel free to include the school's name and the degree awarded.

## Congratulations, Troy!

**Troy Marrero** is graduating from Cornell University on May 27 with a bachelor of science degree. Well done, Troy!

## Pentecost Sunday—Wear Something Red!

The Easter season draws to a close next Sunday with the Solemnity of Pentecost and the liturgical color is red. Help add to our celebration by wearing something red to Mass.



## Register for 2023/24 Children's Faith Formation!

Don't wait! Now is the time to register your children and teens for our 2023/24 children's faith formation program. The season begins on September 24. Remember that high school confirmation is a two-year program, beginning in ninth grade. To register, please fill out this Google form: <https://forms.gle/5KKbrSm2HWEBpm7V6>. Please note that the fee to register is \$200 and you can pay via our iGive platform: <https://www.osvhub.com/stceciliaboston/giving/funds/faith-formation-registration-fee>

## High School Confirmation

Next Sunday afternoon, Bishop Reed will be with us to celebrate the sacrament of confirmation with our 17 high school confirmation candidates. Pray that they will continue to grow in the knowledge of the deep and abiding love God has for each of them.

*Altar server Cece Bagnall with Bishop Reed after last year's confirmation.*



## JOIN THE HUNGER AND HOMELESSNESS MINISTRY MAILING LIST



Over the past decade, Saint Cecilia Parish has developed a significant relationship with several Boston-based non-profit agencies that focus on housing and homelessness as well as hunger relief and food insecurity. From facilitating the collection of food and supply donations for our partners to offering safe, limited-contact opportunities for volunteering, Saint Cecilia's Hunger and Homelessness Ministry provides plenty of ways to pitch in for our neighbors in need. To get involved, or learn more about the work of this important ministry, please contact Mark Lippolt at [Mark.Lippolt@gmail.com](mailto:Mark.Lippolt@gmail.com) to join the mailing list.



## DONATIONS FOR DORCHESTER FOOD PANTRIES



Now that our Faith Formation classes have ended for the academic year and with summer approaching, many of the families that have been faithful donors to our collection of food items for the Catholic Charities and Mary Ann Brett pantries will be away until September.

We hope that you will consider participating in this important ministry during the summer months so that the volume of our donated food remains strong. The local economy might have improved for some of us, but the working poor and unemployed continue to face enormous economic challenges—especially in light of rising food prices. Saint Cecilia has committed to providing these items to the food pantries: Cheerios or cornflakes, peanut butter, white flour pasta and 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. Unfortunately, we cannot accept donations of baked items or produce in the narthex.



## ARE YOU CPR TRAINED?

Last month, we had a very successful CPR training and we're pleased to announce that we have several open slots available for our second CPR training being held on May 21 from 2:00—5:00 p.m. Registration is available on a first-come, first-served basis, so please contact Lisa Pickering (lpickering@stceciliaboston.org) as soon as possible to sign up. If you cannot attend this class, we will offer another training in the fall. Please note that there are two parts to this training—an online and an in-person component. The online component must be completed prior to the in-person training at Saint Cecilia.



## 2023 MOTHER'S DAY WALK FOR PEACE UPDATE

Last Sunday, Saint Cecilia's enthusiastic walking team of fourteen women led a group of parishioners with our parish banner as evidence of our support in the Louis D. Brown Peace Institute's 27th Annual Mother's Day Walk for Peace. The sunny day also opened the bonus of brief encounters with some of the survivor families to witness their stories of loss as they commemorated their deceased. We are pleased to announce with many individual donations and a parish contribution, we raised \$8,000 for the Institute's mission. These funds will help to cultivate cycles of peace and healing by empowering survivors and communities impacted by murder, trauma, grief, and loss. These gifts will have a lasting impact on the Institute's goal of achieving compassionate justice. Thank you to everyone who walked and donated to this meaningful cause!

# PARISH OPERATING STATEMENT

We are pleased to present the Parish Operating Statement for the first nine months of our fiscal year ending March 31, 2023. As you can see, we ended the quarter year on a positive note, with a surplus of \$719,358. Although total expenses are significantly under budget, we have several positions which we have not filled and we have a number of budgeted expenses which we expect to incur during the remainder of the year. We are in the final stages of filling the vacant positions, and we have several hundred thousand dollars of repair and improvement expenses which we expect to incur before the fiscal year ends. As a result, our surplus will decrease. However, we continue to anticipate ending the fiscal year with a substantial surplus.

As always, we continue to be appreciative and thankful for your very generous support of the parish and our ministries. We urge you to continue your stewardship as we all strive to make Saint Cecilia a vibrant and positive force in our community.

## Saint Cecilia Finance Council

Father John Unni, Pastor  
Bonnie Blanchfield  
Alicia Cooney  
Jason Grapski  
Cole Young

Matt Maguire, Chair  
David Castaldi  
Mark Duggan  
Mark Lippolt  
Colleen Melaugh, Director of Finance

## OPERATING STATEMENT

	Quarter Ending Mar 31, 2023	Quarter Ending Mar 31, 2023
<u>INCOME</u>	<u>ACTUAL</u>	<u>BUDGET</u>
Sunday Offertory Income	\$ 1,522,327	\$ 1,387,500
Special Donations Income	\$ 756,698	\$ 569,250
Operating Income	\$ 239,849	\$ 247,500
Miscellaneous Income	\$ 42,144	\$ 39,341
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$ 2,561,018</b>	<b>\$ 2,243,591</b>
 <u>EXPENSES</u>		
Personnel Expenses	\$ 847,902	\$ 941,301
Office Expenses	\$ 135,660	\$ 175,163
Liturgy Expenses	\$ 59,172	\$ 74,213
Building Expenses	\$ 412,817	\$ 543,000
Other Expenses	\$ 273,609	\$ 376,091
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ 1,729,160</b>	<b>\$ 2,109,768</b>
<b>TOTAL INCOME LESS EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ 831,858</b>	<b>\$ 133,823</b>
<b>TRANSFER TO CAPITAL REPAIRS ACCT</b>	<b>\$ (112,500)</b>	<b>\$ (112,500)</b>
<b>FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR OPERATIONS</b>	<b>\$ 719,358</b>	<b>\$ 21,323</b>





## PLEASE SHARE ABOUT OUR RETURNING CITIZENS MINISTRY

Previously known as our Prison and After Ministry, the Saint Cecilia Returning Citizens group meets from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m., every other Monday evening. During each meeting, a group of volunteer parishioners gathers to welcome men local to the Boston area who have experienced any local, state, and federal correctional institutions. Some are recently released, living in supervised settings, and others have already settled in the area. These Monday nights are designed to provide a safe space where men reentering society from prison or jail can feel welcomed and loved. Each evening, these men share their experiences and share a meal with our parishioners. Needless to say, the stories shared are very powerful and a blessing for all to hear.

We need help recruiting and inviting new members. If you know any men who could benefit from this kind of supportive conversation and fellowship, please let them know that they would be more than welcome. Questions? Please email Fr. Jim Shaughnessy, SJ, at [shaughnessyjames1@gmail.com](mailto:shaughnessyjames1@gmail.com).

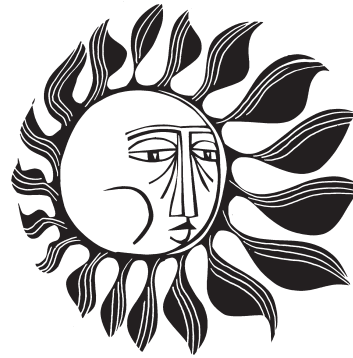


## FRIENDSHIPWORKS ELDERBRATION AND 8TH ANNUAL WALK TO END ELDER ISOLATION

FriendshipWorks serves older adults, 60+ years of age by matching them with volunteers for friendship and assistance. They also have Spanish-speaking staff and can often match in a variety of languages. These services are at no cost. FriendshipWorks service areas include all of Boston, Brookline, Newton, Somerville, and Cambridge. In addition to home visitations, the agency also provides medical escorts, assistance with specific tasks, PetPals, and their MusicWorks program in Boston. Their biggest annual fundraiser takes place on Sunday, May 21 at 9:00 a.m. and is a walk around Jamaica Pond. To join the Saint Cecilia Team or donate: <https://secure.qgiv.com/event/elderbration/team/921643/>

## A REQUEST FROM CATHOLIC CHARITIES

For over 100 years, Sunset Point Camp has provided a dream vacation at the seashore to over 40,000 low-income, at-risk children aged 6-13 from Greater Boston



without regard for their race, nationality, or religious affiliation. Nearly 450 city-based boys and girls travel to Hull, Massachusetts each summer for a one or two-week overnight camp experience that allows them to enjoy fresh air, learn new talents, receive academic

summer support, and simply have fun! Sunset Point Camp is operated by our friends at Catholic Charities and they need donations of the following items for kids at the camp:

- **Sunblock (the higher the SPF the better!)**
- **Bug spray**
- **Flip flops (boys/girls ages 6-15)**
- **Underwear (boys/girls ages 6-15)**

The next time you're shopping or on Amazon.com, please consider picking up some of the above items and dropping them in the labeled plastic bins in the narthex. Thank you!



## CARE-TAKERS SUPPORT GROUP

Calling all parishioners who visit the sick, the elderly, or the homebound! Are you visiting people as part of a hospital or hospice volunteer group or through the CARES ministry and feel that you would benefit from peer support? We are considering starting a parishioner-led group to meet virtually, in person, or on a hybrid basis (likely once a month) to build spiritual connection and share experiences. Anyone who attends Saint Cecilia in person or virtually is welcome. If you are interested, send your thoughts to [aerusso2015@gmail.com](mailto:aerusso2015@gmail.com).

Our best, Silvina Ibanez, Bob Sances, and Amy Russo.





# DISAPPEARING FEET: A HOMILY FOR THE FEAST OF THE ASCENSION

BY D. JONATHAN GRIESER

*Bulletin Editor's Note: This homily was originally preached on May 13, 2010.*

I've been thinking about the Ascension these past few weeks in preparation for tonight's Evensong. I keep reflecting on the oddness of the doctrine of the ascension. It may be the aspect of the church's teaching about Jesus Christ with which we have most difficulty in the twenty-first century. It's not that the Incarnation or Jesus' death and resurrection are easy to accept. Rather, I think it's because both Christmas and Easter have enough cultural significance and liturgical drama that we are able to lay aside most of our doubts and questions, at least most of the time.

Not so with the Ascension. It is a doctrine and a feast that goes unnoticed by the wider culture, and largely unnoticed by Christians as well. So when we come together to celebrate it, we've got no crutches of nostalgia or tradition with which to protect ourselves. We are forced to confront it head on.

And that's the problem. The Ascension seems to require a whole lot of cultural baggage that we just don't carry

with us anymore. The very word, ascension, implies the traditional ancient understanding of the universe as a three-tiered structure with hell somewhere beneath our feet and heaven up there beyond the clouds. And that's something none of us can really take seriously anymore, not since the rise of science, astronomy, and space exploration.

woodcut that is reproduced on tonight's service bulletin. It does rather remind one of the blast-off of a rocket. That, combined with the fact that we see Jesus' toes may lead the less reverent of us to laugh.

The physics of ascension isn't the only problem. There's another one, a theological one. For if Jesus Christ has ascended to heaven, how is it that we can still claim to experience his presence among us, his presence in the bread and wine of the Eucharist? That may not be a big issue for you or me, but it was at the heart of the Eucharistic conflicts during the Protestant Reformation. In fact, some of the reformers argued that because Jesus Christ had bodily ascended and now sat at the right hand of the Father, the body of Christ could not be present in the Eucharistic bread. So we moderns, or post-moderns, if you will, have a great deal of trouble with the doctrine of the ascension. To find meaning in it in the twenty-first century seems almost impossible. But before dismissing it altogether, let's look a little more closely at how the gospels deal with it.

The first observation to make is that only two gospels, Matthew and Luke, describe the scene of the Ascension with Jesus' disciples gathered around him, looking upward as he leaves earth. Mark, typically, doesn't say anything about it, but then Mark doesn't describe the resurrection either.

As is often the case, John is the most interesting. He uses language of ascent throughout his gospel, but it's often not clear whether he is referring to the cross ("being lifted up") the resurrection, or the ascension. And because he refers to the cross repeatedly as Christ's glorification, there's a sense in which crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension are all the same for him.

In John's gospel, Jesus tells his disciples again and again, both before and after his crucifixion, that he will be leaving them. That message is hard for them to hear. Their difficulty of imagining life without the presence of Christ comes out in that poignant resurrection scene when Mary Magdalene encounters the Risen Christ in the garden. She falls to his



*Albrecht Dürer, The Ascension, from the Small Passion, Nuremberg, 1511.*

In fact, I hope you chuckled as you glanced at the Dürer



feet and he warns her, “Don’t touch me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father.” It’s as if he were telling her, “Don’t hang on to me. Don’t hold me down!”

Something of the same comes out in Luke’s account of the Ascension in Acts 1. Luke says that Jesus was lifted up and “a cloud took him out of their sight.” But the disciples continued to gaze up toward heaven, until two angels suddenly appeared and asked them why they were still looking up.

The Ascension is not primarily about the physics or chemistry or astronomy of Jesus Christ’s departure from earth. Rather, it concerns the mystery of Christ’s presence and absence among us. We proclaim Christ’s presence among us. We proclaim his presence in the sacraments. We assert that we are the body of Christ; many of us believe that in the face of the hungry, homeless, and naked, we see the face of Jesus.

But yet, Jesus Christ is not here among us. Each time we recite the creed, we proclaim our faith that Christ has ascended to heaven. We assert that his physical body, though raised, is no longer present with us. If he is present among us, it is in a very different way than he was present among his disciples, whatever we say to the contrary. We cannot touch and feel him; his physical body is not here, no matter what we say.

That is why the gospels, all of them, struggle with the Ascension. The gospel writers struggle to convey to their readers what sort of body Christ’s resurrected body was and they also struggle to make us, their readers understand that in spite of the absence of that body, Christ is among us. Thus, Matthew has Jesus say to his disciples, just before he departs from them, “And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

That’s why we struggle, in the twenty-first century, with the doctrine of the Ascension. We know we do not have the benefit of Jesus Christ’s physical presence among us—most of us would scoff at any claims to the contrary. Many of us would ridicule any beliefs that traces of that presence are here now. Instead, our experience teaches us that Christ is present here; present in the hearts of the faithful, in the body gathered, in the bread and wine, and yes, in the faces of the hungry and homeless.

In fact, so obvious is that presence to us, that we cannot imagine what the Ascension might mean. We chuckle at images of Jesus’ feet sticking through the clouds, and balk at picturing him actually seated on a throne in majesty, in heaven. Therein lies the meaning of it for us today.

It’s easy for us to claim Jesus is present to us. The words flow easily off of our lips, and onto our mission statements and into our sermons. Because of that, it’s very easy for Christianity, especially mainline liberal or progressive Christianity, to degenerate into social service agencies or political action groups. It’s also easy for us to end up celebrating ourselves and all the good things we do in the name of Christ.

The Ascension won’t let us do that. It reminds us that the presence of Christ among us is not all the Christ there is, that whatever our experience of Christ here and now, whatever the church’s experience of Christ and embodiment of Christ over the centuries, that there is something about him that eludes our grasp. The Ascension compels us to look beyond ourselves, beyond our neighbor, to seek the transcendent, the traces of the divine, that elude our grasp, elude our sight, and elude our understanding. Amen.

*~ Rev. Dr. D. Jonathan Grieser has been the Rector of Grace Episcopal Church in Madison, Wisconsin since 2009. He is passionate about Jesus Christ and about connecting faith and tradition with 21st-century culture. He’s also very active in advocating for our homeless neighbors.*



## St. John School

9 Moon Street  
Boston, MA 02113  
(617)-227-3143 | [sjsne.com](http://sjsne.com)  
*Serving PreK3-Grade 8*



## COME AND VISIT US

Contact Rebecca Griffin,  
[bgriffin@sjsne.com](mailto:bgriffin@sjsne.com) to  
schedule a tour



# 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](mailto:info@stceciliaboston.org)

Website | [www.stceciliaboston.org](http://www.stceciliaboston.org)

## Parish Staff

**Rev. John J. Unni**, Pastor

**Rev. James Shaughnessy, SJ**, Pastoral Support

**Keith Brinkley, Mike Currier, Rudy Flores, Parker Olson,**

**Corey Ortiz**, Reception

[reception@stceciliaboston.org](mailto:reception@stceciliaboston.org)

**Christine Burns**, Digital Media Coordinator

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**Tyler Cesario**, Assistant Director of Music

[tcesario@stceciliaboston.org](mailto:tcesario@stceciliaboston.org)

**Mark Donohoe**, Pastoral Associate

[mdonohoe@stceciliaboston.org](mailto:mdonohoe@stceciliaboston.org)

**Robert Duff**, Director of Music

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**Olivia Hastie**, Coordinator of Children's Faith Formation

[ohastie@stceciliaboston.org](mailto:ohastie@stceciliaboston.org)

**Scott MacDonald**, Director of Faith Formation and Parish Visibility

[smacdonald@stceciliaboston.org](mailto:smacdonald@stceciliaboston.org)

**Colleen Melaugh**, Director of Finance and Development

[cmelaugh@stceciliaboston.org](mailto:cmelaugh@stceciliaboston.org)

**Lisa Pickering**, Director of Facilities and Events

[lpickering@stceciliaboston.org](mailto:lpickering@stceciliaboston.org)

## Assisting Clergy

Rev. Terrence Devino, SJ

Rev. Peter Grover, OMV

Rev. Peter Gyves, SJ

## Audiovisual Support

**Maureen Deery**, Parish Photographer & Creator of Weekly Slide Show

[mcdeery@gmail.com](mailto:mcdeery@gmail.com)

**Geoffrey Edwards**, Livestream Videographer

[gedwards@stceciliaboston.org](mailto:gedwards@stceciliaboston.org)

**Vasily Izumchensky**, Livestream Sound Engineer

[vizumchensky@berklee.edu](mailto:vizumchensky@berklee.edu)

## Schedule for Liturgy

**Wednesday, Thursday, & Friday** | 8:00 a.m.

**Lord's Day** | Sat 5:00 p.m.; Sun 8:00, 9:30\*, 11:30 a.m, & 6:00 p.m.

**Holy Days** | 8:00 a.m.

\* Please note that the 9:30 Mass is both in person and livestreamed.

## 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 our Children's Faith Formation Coordinator, Olivia Hastie, at [ohastie@stceciliaboston.org](mailto:ohastie@stceciliaboston.org).

## 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 (VIR-TUS). 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](mailto:loisflaherty@gmail.com)), Maria Roche ([maria.roche15@gmail.com](mailto:maria.roche15@gmail.com)), Letitia Howland ([L\\_howland@hotmail.com](mailto:L_howland@hotmail.com)), or Erin Young ([erin.t.young@gmail.com](mailto:erin.t.young@gmail.com)) if you have any questions or concerns.

The Archdiocese of Boston has in place a vigorous program to protect children from harm and to educate its ministers and faithful about the nature of abuse, with a goal of increasing knowledge, creating a safe environment for children, and recognizing and reporting potentially dangerous situations. The full text of the policy is also available in the narthex and Parish Office, as well as on our website.

## For Those with Celiac Disease

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

## Hearing Assistance in Church

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

## Building Accessibility

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

## Parking

There is discounted parking at The Hynes Auditorium Garage (located at 50 Dalton Street next to Bukowski's Tavern), for \$13, available on Sundays until 3:00 p.m., and \$13 after 4:00 every day of the week. To take advantage of 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.

## 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 parishioner form on our website. No matter what your background or location, please know that you are always welcome at Saint Cecilia.

