

Saint Cecilia

P A R I S H



Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

30 June 2024

The Healing of Jairus' Daughter, ca. 1520-25, Flemish

Saint Cecilia

P A R I S H

30 JUNE 2024

THE THIRTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

PRELUDE | *Schmücke dich, o liebe Seele*, BWV 654
Brett Maguire, organist

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)

ENTRANCE PROCESSION | 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.

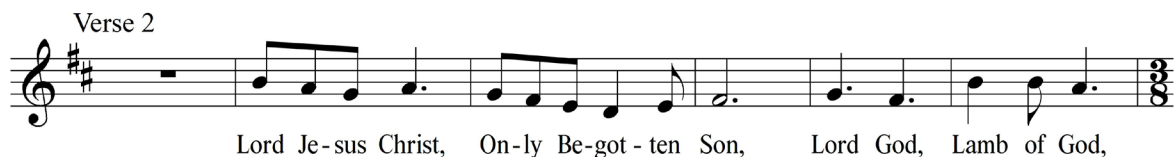
CALL TO WORSHIP

✠ 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.

GLORIA | Mass of Joy and Peace

Tony Alonso



Verse 3

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. ____

COLLECT

LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING | Wisdom 1: 13-15; 2: 23-24

RESPONSORIAL PSALM | Ps. 30: I Will Praise You, Lord

Marty Haugen

I will praise you, Lord, for
 you have res-cued me. I will praise you,
 Lord, for you have res-cued me.

1. I will extol you, Lord, for you have raised me up, and have not let my enemies rejoice over me. O Lord, you have lifted up my soul from the grave, restored me to life from those who sink into the pit.
2. Sing psalms to the Lord, you faithful ones; give thanks to his holy name. His anger lasts a moment; his favor all through life. At night come tears, but dawn brings joy.
3. Hear, O Lord, and have mercy on me; be my helper, O Lord. You have changed my mourning into dancing. O Lord my God, I will thank you forever.

SECOND READING | 2 Corinthians 8: 7, 9, 13-15

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION | Mass of Joy and Peace

Tony Alonso



GOSPEL | Mark 5: 21-43

HOMILY

UNIVERSAL PRAYERS

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT OF THE PARISH!

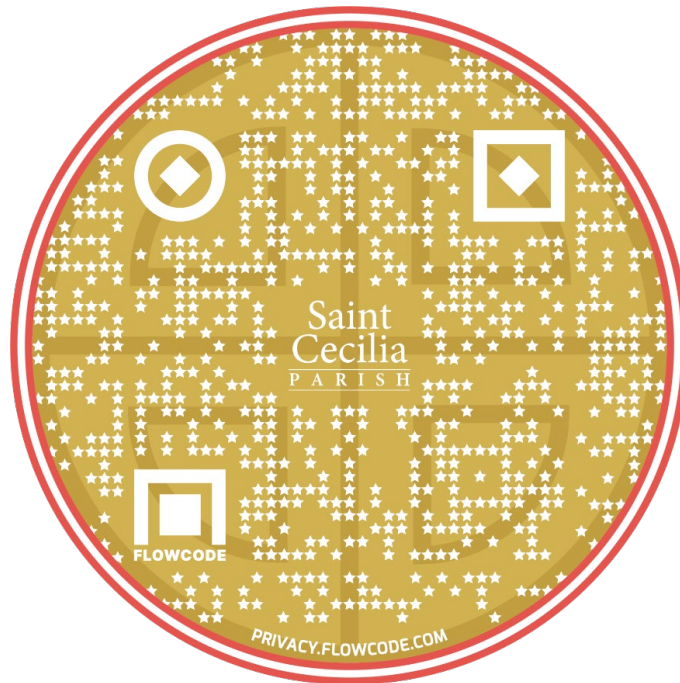
We are grateful for your ongoing support of Saint Cecilia. The easiest way to make a financial contribution to our parish is to use the parish Flowcode below.

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.

You can also mail a check to:

Saint Cecilia Parish
18 Belvidere Street
Boston, MA 02115



LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

PRESENTATION OF THE GIFTS | Come to the Water

John Foley, S.J.



1. O let all who thirst, let them come to the
2. And let all who seek, let them come to the
3. And let all who toil, let them come to the
4. And let all the poor, let them come to the



wa - ter. And let all who have noth - ing,
wa - ter. And let all who have noth - ing,
wa - ter. And let all who are wea - ry,
wa - ter. Bring the ones who are lad - en,



let them come to the Lord: With-out mon-ey,
let them come to the Lord: With-out mon-ey,
let them come to the Lord: All who la - bor,
bring them all to the Lord: Bring the chil - dren



with-out price. Why should you pay the price,
with-out strife. Why should you spend your life,
with-out rest. How can your soul find rest,
with-out might. Eas - y the load and light:



ex - cept for the Lord?
ex - cept for the Lord?
ex - cept for the Lord?
? come to the Lord.

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.

HOLY, HOLY | Mass of Christ, the Savior

Dan Schutte

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 -

The musical score is written for a single voice part in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of four staves. The first staff contains the melody for 'Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Ho - ly Lord God of hosts. Heav-en and'. The second staff continues with 'earth are full, are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na! Ho -'. The third staff continues with 'san - na! Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless-ed is'. The fourth staff concludes with 'he who comes, who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -'. There are triplets indicated by a '3' over the notes in the first and third staves. A 'Fine' marking is placed above the third staff.

MEMORIAL ACCLAMATION | Mass of Christ, the Savior

Dan Schutte

We pro - claim your Death, O Lord, and pro - fess your
Res - ur - rec - tion un - til you come a - gain.

The musical score is written for a single voice part in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of two staves. The first staff contains the melody for 'We pro - claim your Death, O Lord, and pro - fess your'. The second staff concludes with 'Res - ur - rec - tion un - til you come a - gain.'. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with a clear cadence at the end.

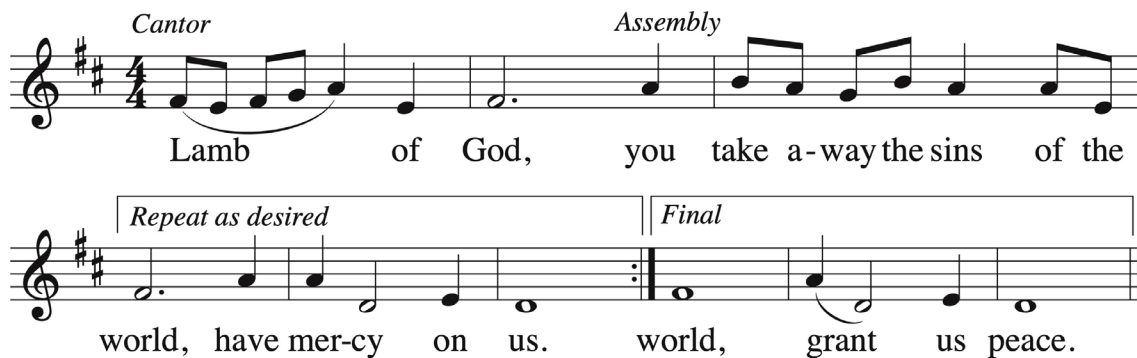


THE LORD'S PRAYER

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 Joy and Peace

Tony Alonso



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.

Refrain



Come to me, come to me, come when you are wea - ry;



come to me, come to me, and I will give you rest.

Verses 1, 2



1. All who la - bor and are bur - dened,
2. Take my yoke up - on your shoul - ders,



all who la - bor and are bur - dened, let them come to me,
take my yoke up - on your shoul - ders, come and learn from me,



come to me, and I will give them rest.
learn from me, for I am gen - tle of heart.

D.C.

Verse 3



3. For the heart I hold is hum - ble, yes, the



heart I hold is hum - ble, and my yoke is eas - y, my



bur - den light, and you will find rest for your souls.

D.C.

Verse 4



4. All the Fa - ther gives will come to me;
all the Fa - ther gives will come to me; and who -
ev - er comes to me, who - ev - er comes to me,
I will nev - er cast out. **D.C.**

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.

Refrain

Lead me, guide me, a - long the way, For if you
lead me, I can - not stray. Lord, let me walk each
day with thee. Lead me, O Lord, lead me.

Verses

1. I am weak and I need thy strength and pow'r To
2. Help me tread in the paths of right - eous - ness. Be my
3. I am lost if you take your hand from me, I am
help me o - ver my weak - est hour. Help me through the
aid when Sa - tan and sin op - press. I am put - ting
blind with - out thy Light to see. Lord, just al - ways
dark-ness thy face to see. Lead me, O Lord, lead me.
all my trust in thee. Lead me, O Lord, lead me.
let me thy ser - vant be. Lead me, O Lord, lead me.

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, June 29 | 5:00 p.m.

Most Rev. Raymond Wickramasinghe, celebrant
Maggie Giles, lector

Sunday, June 30 | 8:00 a.m.

Most Rev. Raymond Wickramasinghe, celebrant
Nicholas Hayes-Mota, lector

Sunday, June 30 | 9:30 a.m.

Rev. John Unni, celebrant
Most Rev. Raymond Wickramasinghe, homilist
Chika Offurum, Ben DeWinter, and Kaitlin O'Connor, lectors

Sunday, June 30 | 11:30 a.m.

Rev. John Unni, celebrant
Most Rev. Raymond Wickramasinghe, homilist
Bobbi Moran, Catherine Horsley, and Julie DesAutels, lectors

SPECIAL INTENTIONS

Sunday, June 30 | 8:00 a.m.

Philomena Hong Giok Abrescy, *Memorial*
Lucille Ann Mantella, *Memorial*

Sunday, June 30 | 9:30 a.m.

Carol Ascrizzi, *Memorial*
Nicholas Freitas, *Memorial*

Sunday, June 30 | 11:30 a.m.

Joe & Peg Leahy, *Memorial*

Wednesday, July 3 | 8:00 a.m.

John S. Carter, *Memorial*

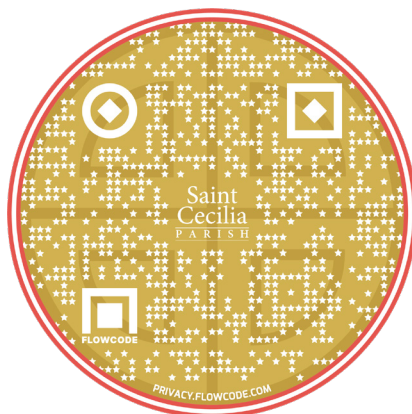
TODAY'S READINGS

Wisdom 1:13-15, 2:23-24
2 Corinthians 8:7, 9, 13-15
Mark 5:21-43

NEXT SUNDAY'S READINGS

Ezekiel 2:2-5
2 Corinthians 12:7-10
Mark 6:1-6a

**SCAN THIS CODE
FOR OFFERTORY GIVING.**



**THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS
SUPPORT OF SAINT CECILIA PARISH!**



PRAYERS & OCCASIONS

Our Deceased

Rev. Richard Stanley, SJ died on June 8. Pray for the repose of his soul and for the consolation of Father Stanley's confreres, family, and friends. May his soul and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

Our Sick

Please pray for all our sick and for those who are in need of our prayer, especially Jacqueline Lavelle, Glenn Gallo, Marc Pelletier, Michele Maniscalco, and Fred Tufts.

Welcome to Saint Cecilia Parish!

We are pleased to welcome the following new registrants: **Jo Dutcher** of Stamford, CT, **Sheila Holland** of Quincy, **Andrew Reitz** of Malden, **Sam Schelble** of Brookline, **David Sepulveda** and **Allison LeBlanc** of Arlington, and **John and Karen Corrigan** and **Katie Gassert** of Boston. If you have not previously registered you can do so online at <https://www.stceciliaboston.org/>

Coffee Hospitality Update

As a gentle reminder, we will not have coffee hospitality for two holiday weekends in the summer—the Fourth of July and Labor Day weekends—so we can give our hardworking hospitality team time off to enjoy these holidays.



Looking Ahead: Independence Day

Each year, the Fourth of July gives us the opportunity not only to delight in summer's beauty but to give thanks to God for freedom and prosperity in a beautiful and diverse nation. We pray for peace and for safe homecoming for soldiers, solace for their families, and healing for those wounded in mind and body. We pray also for the safety of all who will be traveling this coming week. Happy Fourth of July!

Change in Office Hours

In observance of Independence Day, the parish offices will be closed on Thursday, July 4 and Friday, July 5. **We will still have 8:00 a.m. daily Mass on these days.**

Summer Prayers

For the safety of travelers near and far, for rest and renewal for vacationers, and for a summer filled with

peace, joy, and delight, reunions with dear friends, and encounters with beautiful places and people, we pray!

Missionary Cooperative Appeal

Every summer, each parish in the archdiocese is asked to host a missionary who will speak about the missions and appeal for our prayers and financial support. This weekend we will welcome the Most Rev. Raymond Wickramasinghe, bishop of the mission Diocese of Galle in Sri Lanka. Bishop Wickramasinghe will be the homilist at all of this weekend's liturgies and we look forward to meeting him and hearing his story. There will be a second collection for the support of his diocese. You can give here: <https://www.osvhub.com/stceciliaboston/giving/funds/missionary-cooperative-appeal-2024>. Thank you!



Catholic Appeal Update:

We're Almost There!

We are pleased to share that, through this year's Catholic Appeal campaign, we've reached 91% of our financial goal of \$149,149 and exceeded of our donor goal. With your continued support, we aim to complete our campaign by June 30. Your generosity supports vital ministries such as Catholic education, faith formation, and outreach services that bring Christ's love to those in need. You can donate here: <https://bostoncatholicappeal.org/donate1/>. Thank you so much for your generosity!

Happy Pride Month!

Saint Cecilia wishes a Happy Pride to our LGBTQ+ siblings. Thank you for the courage you show in living lives of authenticity and for reminding us all that love always wins. May we never forget that every one of us is made in the beautiful image of God and is entitled to be treated with "respect, compassion, and sensitivity." *~Catechism of the Catholic Church.*

God of justice and Father of truth, who guides creation in wisdom and goodness to fulfillment in Christ your Son, open our hearts to the truth of his Gospel, that your peace may rule in our hearts and your justice guide our lives.

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. In addition, we deliver parish donations to two Dorchester pantries: the Mary Ann Brett Pantry and the Catholic Charities pantry at the Yawkey Center. This vital ministry takes place at 8:00 a.m. every Saturday and Sunday morning and on Sundays, it can be completed in time to attend or watch the 9:30 a.m. parish Mass. We need drivers for all the Saturdays and Sundays in June and July. Please email our Hunger and Homelessness Ministry if you would like more information about how you can help.



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 so they can enjoy the fresh air, learn new talents, receive academic summer support, and simply have fun!

Sunset Point Camp is operated by our friends at Catholic Charities. They have mentioned to us that they always need donations of the following items for the 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)

So the next time you're out shopping or on Amazon, please consider picking up some of the items above and dropping them in the plastic bin identified for this purpose in the narthex. Thank you!



DONATIONS FOR DORCHESTER FOOD PANTRIES

With summer here, 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. You may wish to follow the example of some of our parishioners and have some of the items above delivered to the parish via Amazon or a similar service. If you choose to, please have them delivered to *Saint Cecilia Parish, 18 Belvidere Street, Boston, MA 02115*. Thank you!

INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT THE CATHOLIC FAITH?

Are you or is someone you know searching for a spiritual home? Are you interested in learning more about what it means to be Catholic? If you would like to explore Catholicism or are already Catholic but have not yet received Eucharist, we would be honored to accompany you in your journey. For more information, email Tanya Rybarczyk at her parish email address or call her at 617-536-4548 X117.

THIS WEEK AT SAINT CECILIA

JUNE 30 – JULY 7

Sunday, June 30

Wisdom Group, 8:30 a.m. | Zoom
Young Families Gathering, following 9:30 a.m. Mass
Family Flex Center
SCYA Contemplative Prayer Group, 2:00 p.m.

Monday, July 1

Knitting Ministry, 3:30–4:30 p.m. | Zoom
SCYA Women's Group, 7:30 p.m. | Zoom

Wednesday, July 3

SCYA Men's Group, 7:30 a.m. | Zoom
Communion Circle, 3:30 p.m. | Susan Balis House
LGBTQ+ Space to Share, 6:30–8:00 p.m.

Thursday, July 4

Daily Mass, 8:00 a.m.
Independence Day Holiday—Parish Offices Closed

Friday, July 5

Daily Mass, 8:00 a.m. | Parish Offices Closed

Sunday, July 7

Wisdom Group, 8:30 a.m. | Zoom
Far-Flung Flock Coffee Hour, 4:00 p.m. | Zoom



JOIN OUR WISDOM & MATURE
SPIRITUALITY GROUP

Our Wisdom and Mature Spirituality Group holds two online gatherings each week on Zoom. They meet on Thursday evenings from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. and Sunday mornings from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. to share how faith informs and enriches the second half of life. This group is not a book club, but their conversations are often informed by shared spiritual reading. The group's next book is *The Beatitudes of Peace* by John Dear. To request information or be added to their mailing list, please email the ministry at their parish address.

SAINT CECILIA FAR-FLUNG FLOCK
ONLINE COFFEE HOUR

Sunday, July 7, 2024, at 4:00 p.m. ET

The Far-Flung Flock leadership team is thrilled to welcome Saint Cecilia parishioners from Michigan as our guests for the July online coffee hour. Over the past three years, through participating in livestream Sunday Mass and chatting these Michigan parishioners have been inspired to connect and minister to their local communities, following the example set by Saint Cecilia's various ministries.

The Michigan community is a shining example of our engaging church that welcomes all, demonstrating that the spirit of Saint Cecilia extends far beyond Boston. Join us for this inspiring coffee hour to hear their stories and to connect with fellow parishioners.

If you have not registered for any online coffee hour in the past, please register for the FFF email list with this link (<https://bit.ly/45pDVRa>). There is no need to re-register if you've attended in the past. If you have registered but are not receiving FFF email notifications, please email the ministry to confirm your email address.

RETURNING CITIZENS MINISTRY:
LOOKING FOR NEW MEMBERS

Previously known as our Prison and After Ministry, the Saint Cecilia Returning Citizens group meets every other Monday evening from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m. to provide a safe, welcoming space for men transitioning back into society following prison or jail. Each meeting consists of an opportunity to discuss challenges (and wins!) and gain support, followed by a shared meal. In particular, we welcome individuals from Coolidge House (the federal release center on Huntington Avenue) and Brooke House (the state release center in the Fenway). We are looking for more men to join us, so, if you know anyone who could benefit from this group, please personally invite them to join. You can refer any questions to the group's ministry email. Your referral could make a significant difference in someone's life!

LOW-GLUTEN ALTAR BREAD AVAILABLE

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. These hosts are prepared by the Benedictine Sisters of Perpetual Adoration in Clyde, Missouri.



It was a low moment for Maureen Rasmussen. It was August 2018 and Rasmussen, a devout Catholic who prays the rosary daily, had had a jarring conversation with a priest she had sought out on a deeply personal matter. Rasmussen had struggled most of her life with the gender she was assigned at birth. She had undergone two years of therapy to clarify her personal need for transition. In her late 50s, she had begun taking the hormones that would conform her body to her deep conviction that she was a woman. They had worked. She had started to feel better as a person.

Early on, a priest had encouraged her on her path. “You’re comfortable in your own skin, and God doesn’t make mistakes,” he had said. But now, before she went any further: “It was important to revisit the spiritual thing one more time. Just to make sure I got it right. It’d be sort of like the blessing on top of the cake.” Only this time, there was no blessing. Rasmussen told the new priest, at a Maryland priory, that she was preparing to break the news to her wife. This priest said that the plans were an offense to her marriage vows and her faith. He pointed to a crucifix on the wall and said, “You cannot transition. This is your cross to bear,” she remembers.

“I walked out of there like someone had deflated me. When things go wrong in your life, really hard stuff, you draw on your faith. But when your faith kicks you to the curb when you’re going through it, where else are you going to go?”

Rasmussen went to her laptop, and repeated an exercise that she attempted every few years, despite its not working. She searched for the phrase “Catholic transgender resources.” Historically, this had yielded only crisscrossing polemics and ads for conversion therapy. But something new had popped up. It was a profile from the news site *Al Jazeera America*. “Call this nun Sister Monica,” it read, “though it’s not her real name.” Monica, it turned out, was a nun at an unidentified location who prayed for trans people and ministered to them according to the gender they knew themselves to be.

Under the circumstances, Rasmussen was not going to be deterred by a pseudonym. She contacted the article’s writer, who promised to forward an email to the sister. Rasmussen wrote: “I am a practicing Catholic, daily Mass attendee and transgender. I pray every day for discernment and good judgment according to God’s will....” She asked whether Monica could assist in her spiritual direction. She signed off: “I will keep you in my prayers.... Have a super day.” And a smiley-face emoji.

“Just embrace us. Don’t displace us.”

Rasmussen is a put-together dresser. Today, she has on tan slacks, a navy top and a striped spring sweater that picks up both colors. On her right hand she wears a small band with a turquoise stone that matches her striking blue eyes. The far shorter woman next to her on a hotel lobby couch in Manhattan—they are attending a conference—takes her other hand. “You were just so incredibly filled with anguish,” says the second woman, Sister Luisa Derouen, O.P.

“When we first started talking, you needed a religious authority. ‘I know I’m transgender. Is this okay with God? I can’t break my relationship with God. Can I still be faithful to God and be trans? Can I be faithful to God as a Catholic?’”

Derouen, petite and trim, has on a black top from Talbots and taupe slacks. (“I can’t afford Talbots. My cousin—I get all her leftovers.”) She wears a small enameled pendant featuring the insignia of the Dominican Sisters of Peace: an olive branch on a black-and-white shield. She goes on, “I asked you, ‘Can you not be trans?’ You said, ‘No.’ Then this is who you are. This is how God made you, and all that God made is precious and good. And God loves you as you are. Being true to that doesn’t separate you from God. It gives glory to God.”

Says Rasmussen, “I had never really heard it from that perspective.”

Derouen still holds her hand. She is a hugger and a holder. She will employ the politician’s maneuver of locking your elbow while looking deep into your eyes. At this meeting, she is 79, but with the relentless energy of someone decades younger. Derouen can do the high or the low: writing essays with the precision and command that reflect her two degrees; or unleashing “Ted Lasso”-isms like “God’s middle name truly is Surprise!” or even more obscure sayings like “They wouldn’t know me from Esmerelda’s cat.” She radiates cheerful optimism but also, a bit disconcertingly, has what spiritual writers call the “gift of tears,” crying whenever certain subjects arise.

The two women chat and banter like sisters but have met

face to face just today, after years of remote communication. Perhaps their biggest dual accomplishment, once Rasmussen passed through her dark night of the soul, was her participation in a Zoom group with five American bishops drafting guidelines for Catholic health care organizations on treating transgender people. Derouen did not think any of them had (knowingly) met a trans person. "I wanted them to hear her story," she says. "Maureen is so Catholic, the way the bishops understand it. Catholic on their terms."

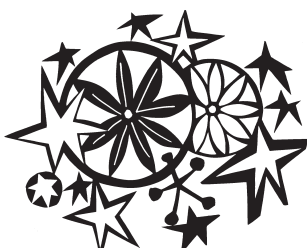
Rasmussen, who until recently co-owned a successful Maryland-based lighting company ("I brighten people's lives") and did a lot of presentations, says she could tell the bishops were listening. When she finished her prepared statement, one of them asked how he should respond if a member of his congregation said they had a trans child. Rasmussen remembers answering, "All you can do is try to embrace it. You don't have to accept all of it, but don't close the door on it. That doesn't work, anyway."

Rasmussen is a realist. The acceptance of trans people by the Catholic hierarchy, she says, "probably will not happen in my lifetime. But we can't solve all the world's problems. If we even do just a little piece, isn't that something?"

She looks at Derouen. "Just embrace us. Don't displace us," she says.

Derouen beams.

~ *David Van Biema is the former chief religion writer for Time magazine, where he worked from 1993 to 2008. His writing has appeared in The Atlantic, Religion News Service and elsewhere. He is the co-author of Mother Teresa: The Life and Works of a Modern Saint.*



JOIN OUR BIWEEKLY SIMEON & ANNA SENIORS GATHERING

Thursday, July 11, 10:00 a.m.–11:30 a.m.
Every Other Week Following

*Join us for coffee, sweets, and
conversation, followed by prayer and song!*

* The first 30 minutes are open for folks to arrive, be welcomed into the space, and for hospitality.

Where? Saint Cecilia Parish (enter through the doors on St. Cecilia St. and ring the bell to be let in).

Questions? Email Lucy Conroy
(seniors@stceciliaboston.org)



SHAKESPEARE ON THE COMMON & PARISH PICNIC/POTLUCK

Wednesday, July 17, 6:30 p.m. | Boston Common

For years, Saint Cecilia parishioners have gathered for a parish picnic/potluck before Shakespeare on the Common. This year, we invite you to join us for *The Winter's Tale* on Wednesday, July 17 on the Boston Common near the Parkman Bandstand. We'll reserve space and have a potluck picnic beforehand—a great opportunity to connect with other parishioners! The picnic is at 6:30 p.m. and the play begins at 8:00 p.m. For more information, please email Jenny Jones (ClimateJustice@stceciliaboston.org). Jenny will be in the back of the church following the 9:30 and 11:30 Masses on July 7 and 14 with a sign-up sheet and more information. The play is free, though donations to the Commonwealth Shakespeare Company are much appreciated: <http://www.commshakes.org/>

PARISH RESOURCES

Parish Office & Mailing Address

18 Belvidere Street, Boston, MA 02115
Hours | Monday-Friday, 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. & By Appointment
Phone | 617 536 4548; Fax | 617 536 1781
Website | www.stceciliaboston.org

Parish Staff

Rev. John J. Unni, Pastor
Rev. James Shaughnessy, SJ, Pastoral Support
Christine Burns, Digital and Print Media Coordinator
Mark Donohoe, Pastoral Associate
Robert Duff, Director of Music
Carly-Anne Gannon, Coordinator of Children's Faith Formation
Scott MacDonald, Director of Faith Formation and Parish Visibility
Colleen Melaugh, Director of Finance and Development
Nicole Pascarelli O'Brien, Pastoral Director of Operations
Lisa Pickering, Director of Facilities and Events
Tanya Rybarczyk, Pastoral Associate

Assisting Clergy

Rev. Peter Grover, OMV | Rev. Peter Gyves, 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
Vasily Izumchensky, Livestream Sound 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., & 6:00 p.m.
Holy Days | 8:00 a.m.
* Please note that the 9:30 Mass is both in person and livestreamed.

Hearing Assistance in Church

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

Building Accessibility

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

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 \$13, available on Sundays until 3:00 p.m., and \$13 after 4:00 every day of the week. To get this discount, ask a greeter for a chaser ticket at Mass or ask a staff person during the week. Chaser tickets must be used at the machine at the exit gate. To obtain the discount, place the ticket you received upon entering the garage into the machine, then follow it with the chaser ticket.

Baptism for Infants

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

Faith Formation for Children

To register your child for Faith Formation, contact our Children's Faith Formation Coordinator, Carly-Anne Gannon, at her parish email.

Child Abuse Prevention (CAP) Team

The CAP Team is responsible for training all parish staff and volunteers in mandated reporting laws and the Protecting God's Children program (VIR-TUS). They provide consultation and support to anyone who has concerns about reporting child abuse and neglect. Please contact Maria Roche, Letitia Howland, or Erin Young if you have any questions. The Archdiocese of Boston has in place a vigorous program to protect children from harm and to educate its ministers and faithful about the nature of abuse, with a goal of increasing knowledge, creating a safe environment for children, and recognizing and reporting potentially dangerous situations. The full policy is available in the narthex, Parish Office, and on our website.

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)

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

Marriage

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

Care of the Sick

To arrange for the Sacrament of the Sick, for Holy Communion to be brought to those unable to attend the Sunday celebration, or for Viaticum for the Dying (Holy Communion for those in danger of death), please contact the Parish Office. It is always possible to anoint the sick during regularly scheduled liturgies.

Order of Christian Funerals

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

Joining Our Community

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

Please note:

According to online safety guidelines released by the Archdiocese of Boston, we have removed email addresses from our online parish bulletin to avoid the danger of potential phishing scams. If you need a staff member's email address or ministry email address, please call our reception desk (617-536-4548) and our receptionists would be happy to pass along the appropriate information. Thank you for helping us maintain our parish security online!