

Saint Cecilia

P A R I S H



treasure hidden in a field
© Corita Art Centre, Immaculate Heart Community, Los Angeles, California

by Corita Kent (c.1951)
National Galleries of Scotland

Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

26 July 2026

Saint Cecilia

P A R I S H

26 JULY 2026

THE SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

PRELUDE | *Andante Sostenuto* from Symphony Gothique

Charles Marie Widor
(1844-1937)

ENTRANCE PROCESSION | The Church's One Foundation

AURELIA



1. The Chur-ch's one foun - da - tion Is Je - sus Christ, her
2. E - lect from ev - 'ry na - tion, Yet one o'er all the
3. Through toil and trib - u - la - tion And tu - mult of her
4. Yet she on earth has u - nion With God, the Three in



Lord; She is his new cre - a - tion By wa - ter
earth; Her char - ter of sal - va - tion: One Lord, one
war She waits the con - sum - ma - tion Of peace for -
One, And mys - tic sweet com - mun - ion With those whose



and the Word. From heav'n he came and sought her To
faith, one birth. One ho - ly name she bless - es, Par -
ev - er - more Till with the vi - sion glo - rious Her
rest is won. O bless - ed heav'n - ly cho - rus! Lord,



be his ho - ly bride; With his own blood he
takes one ho - ly food, And to one hope she
long - ing eyes are blessed, And the great Church vic -
save us by your grace That we, like saints be -



bought her, And for her life he died.
press - es With ev - 'ry grace en - dued.
to - rious Shall be the Church at rest.
fore us, May see you face to face.

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 E. Alonso

Refrain

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

Verses

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.
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.
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;
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.

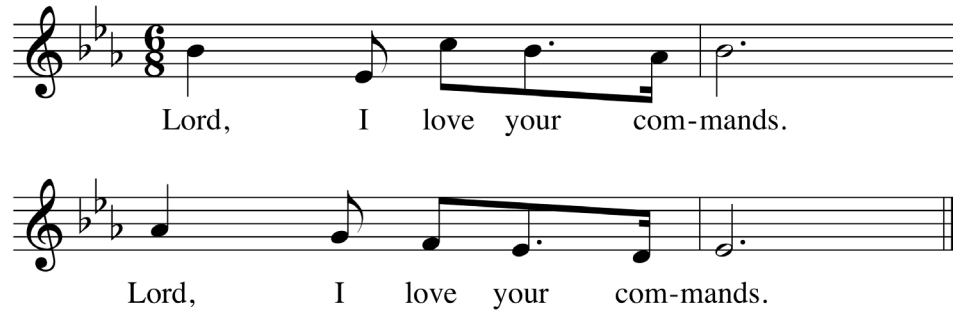
COLLECT

LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING | 1 Kings 3: 5, 7-12

RESPONSORIAL PSALM | Ps. Lord, I Love Your Commands

Tony E. Alonso

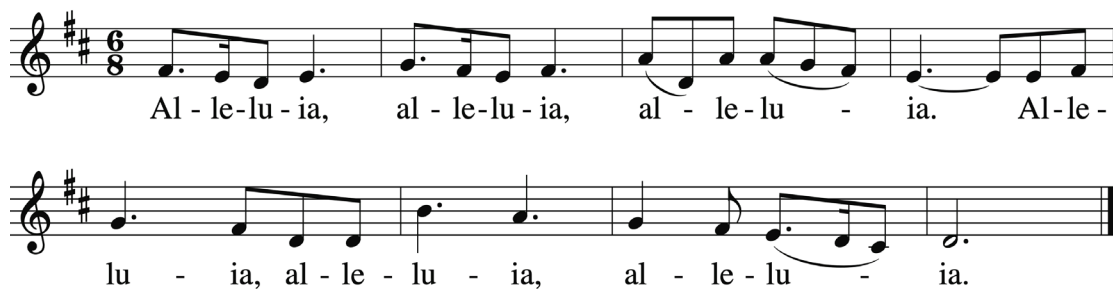


1. I have said, "O Lord, my portion is to obey your words."
The law from your mouth means more to me than large quantities of silver and gold.
2. Let your merciful love console me by your promise to your servant.
Show me compassion, that I may live, for your law is my delight.
3. That is why I love your commands more than finest gold, why I rule my life by your precepts, and hate false ways.
4. Your decrees are wonderful indeed; therefore, my soul obeys them.
The unfolding of your word gives light and understanding to the simple.

SECOND READING | Romans 8: 28-30

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION | Mass of Joy and Peace

Tony E. Alonso



GOSPEL | Matthew 13: 44-52

HOMILY

NICENE CREED

I believe in one God,

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

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT OF THE PARISH!

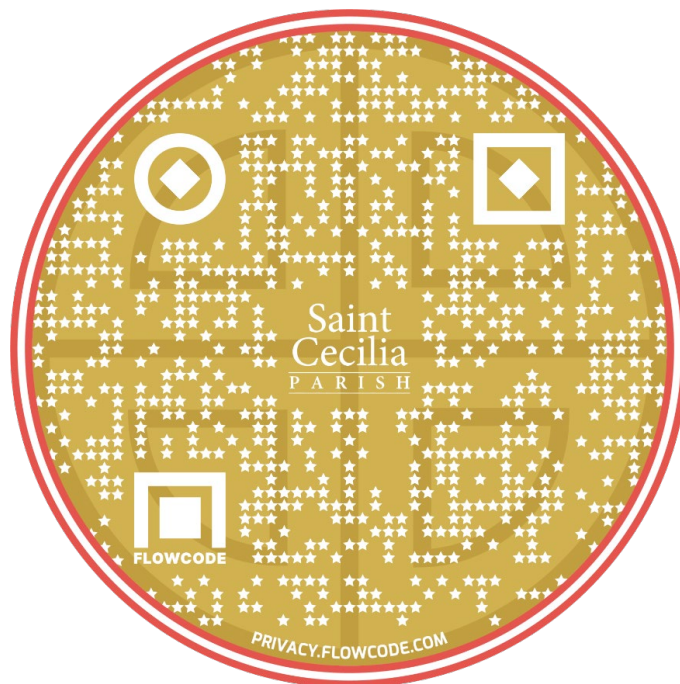
We are grateful for your ongoing support of Saint Cecilia. The easiest way to make a financial contribution to our parish is to use the parish Flowcode below.

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

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

You can also mail a check to:

Saint Cecilia Parish
18 Belvidere Street
Boston, MA 02115



LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

PRESENTATION OF THE GIFTS | Make Me a Channel of Your Peace

Sebastian Temple

Verses 1, 2, 4 / Estrofas 1, 2, 4



1. Make me a chan - nel of your peace.
2. Make me a chan - nel of your peace.
4. Make me a chan - nel of your peace.

1. Haz - me un ins - tru - men - to de tu paz,
2. Haz - me un ins - tru - men - to de tu paz,
4. Haz - me un ins - tru - men - to de tu paz,



Where there is ha - tred, let me bring your
Where there's de - spair in life, let me bring
It is in par - don - ing that we are
Don - de ha - ya o - dio lle - ve yo tu a -
Que lle - ve tu es - pe - ran - za por do -
Es per - do - nan - do que nos das per -



love.
hope.
par - doned,
mor,
quier,
dón,

Where there is in - ju -
Where there is dark - ness,
In giv - ing of our -
Don - de ha - ya in - ju - ria,
Don - de ha - ya os - cu - ri -
Es dan - do a to - dos



ry, your par - don, Lord,
on - ly light,
selves that we re - ceive,
tu per - dón, Se - ñor,
dad lle - ve tu luz,
que tú nos das,

And where there's doubt, true faith in
 And where there's sad - ness, ev - er
 And in dy - ing that we're born to e - ter - nal
 Don - de ha - ya du - da fe en
 Don - de ha - ya pe - na, go - zo en ti, Se -
 Y mu - rien - do es que vol - ve - mos a na -

1. you.
 joy.
 life.
 ti.
 ñor.
 cer.

2. To verse 3

3.

Verse 3 / Estrofa 3

3. Oh, Mas - ter, grant that I may nev - er seek
 3. Ma - es - tro, a - yú - da - me a nun - ca bus - car

So much to be con - soled as to con - sole,
 El ser con - so - la - do si - no con - so -

lar, To be un - der - stood as to un - der - stand,
 Ser en - ten - di - do si - no en - ten - der,

To be loved as to love with all my soul.
 Ser a - ma - do si - no a - mar.

D.C.

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.

SANCTUS | Mass of Joy and Peace

Tony E. Alonso

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

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

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

high - est. Bless-ed is he, bless-ed is he who

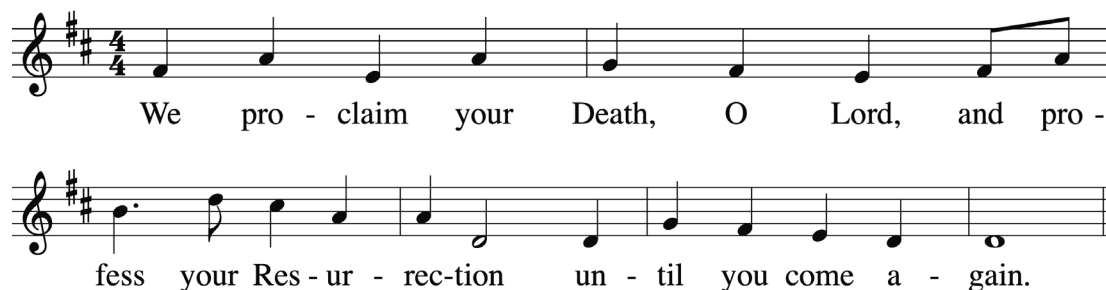
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the

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

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

MEMORIAL ACCLAMATION | Mass of Joy and Peace

Tony E. Alonso



AMEN | Mass of Joy and Peace

Tony E. Alonso



THE LORD'S PRAYER

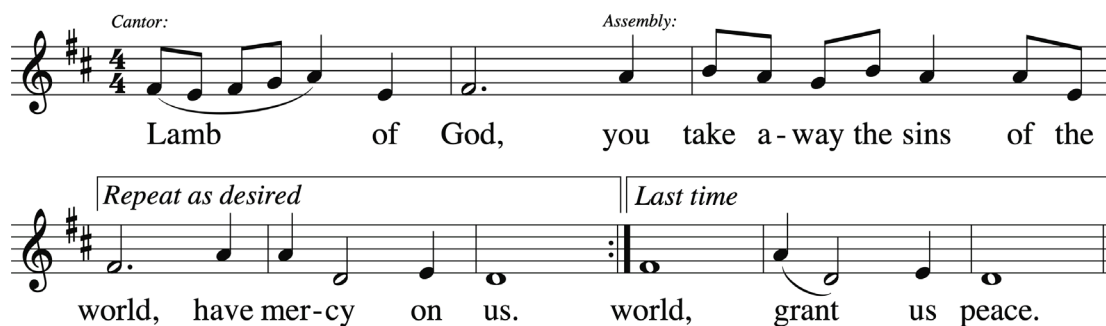
Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom,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

THE EXCHANGE OF PEACE

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

AGNUS DEI | Mass of Joy and Peace

Tony E. 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.

COMMUNION | All Who Hunger

Bob Moore



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.

CONCLUDING RITE

✠ 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.

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, July 25 | 5:00 p.m.

Rev. Peter Grover, OMV, celebrant
Uma Staehler, lector

Sunday, July 26 | 8:00 a.m.

Celebrant: TBD
Tom Skorupa, lector

Sunday, July 26 | 9:30 a.m.

Rev. John Unni, celebrant
Maggie Giles, Zachary Boutin, Laura Melle, lectors

Sunday, July 26 | 11:30 a.m.

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

SPECIAL INTENTIONS

Saturday, July 25 | 5:00 p.m.

Gerald Maloney, *Memorial*

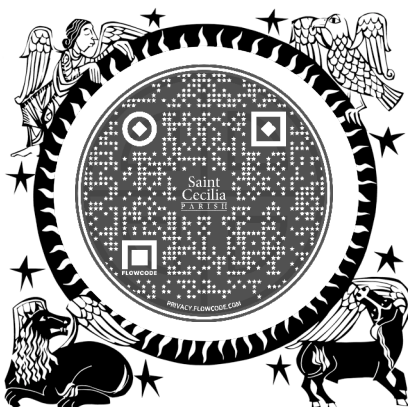
Sunday, July 26 | 9:30 a.m.

Mal Versage, *Memorial*
Mary Mitchell, *Memorial*
Linda Adams, *Memorial*
Kelly Anderson, *Memorial*
Domenic Schiarizzi, *Memorial*
Gigi Gaquin, *Memorial*
Christopher Jude O'Connor, *Memorial*

Sunday, July 26 | 11:30 a.m.

James Galvin, *Memorial*

Scan this code for
offertory giving:



Thank you for your generous
support of Saint Cecilia Parish!



TODAY'S READINGS

1 Kings 3:5, 7-12
Romans 8:28-30
Matthew 13:44-52

NEXT SUNDAY'S READINGS

Isaiah 55:1-3
Romans 8:35, 37-39
Matthew 14:13-21

PRAYERS & OCCASIONS

Welcome to Saint Cecilia Parish!

We are pleased to welcome the following new members of our community: **Madeline Capodilupo** and **Jack St Hilaire**, **Sophia Whelpley** and **Zak Swetye**, and **Kevin Manouchehri**. If you have not previously registered, you can do so online at www.stceciliaboston.org.

Remembering the Children of Gaza

In this time of ongoing humanitarian suffering, we continue to pray for peace in the Holy Land and throughout the world. We hold especially in prayer the children and families of Gaza who have endured unimaginable loss, displacement, hunger, and the constant search for safety. As Pope Leo has said, *"From the Gaza Strip, the cries of mothers and fathers rise to the heavens as they hold the lifeless bodies of their children and are forced to constantly move in search of a bit of food and a safer shelter from the bombings."*

Saint Cecilia has been invited to participate in the Children's Shroud, an interfaith memorial in which Christian, Muslim, and Jewish communities inscribe the names of children who have died in Gaza. The completed shroud will be displayed during a public prayer vigil in Washington, DC, as a witness to the dignity of every human life and a prayer for peace. We have been entrusted with 500 names. After the 9:30 and 11:30 liturgies on July 26 and August 9, parishioners are invited to join us in the Classroom 1 to prayerfully inscribe these names. We hope you'll take part in this simple act of remembrance, prayer, and hope.



*The floral arrangement in front of the altar is given for the glory of God and in loving memory of **Mal Versage** by her daughter **Eve Versage**.*

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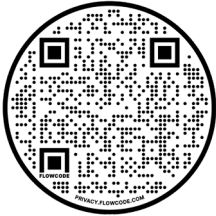
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Treasurefield #1 by Jim Janknegt

SUMMER CHORAL SESSIONS

SUNDAY, JULY 26 | 2PM - 4PM | CLASSROOM 1



This summer, the parish will offer free Sunday afternoon sessions on singing and choral music from June 14-August 23 taught by Tyler Cesario and Kayleigh Bennett. Open to all parishioners, topics include sight-singing, vocal technique, diction, vocal anatomy, harmony and balance, choral stylization, and audition/performance preparation. To register, scan the Flowcode below or visit www.tinyurl.com/summer-choral-sessions.

ATTENTION MARRIED COUPLES

SUNDAY, JULY 26 | 11AM | COMMUNITY ROOM

Married couples are warmly invited to join others from the Saint Cecilia Marriage Ministry for a gathering of faith, fellowship, and encouragement. Whether you are newly married or have shared many years together, this gathering is an opportunity to strengthen your relationship with one another and with Christ while connecting with other couples in our parish community.

Come enjoy meaningful conversation, prayer, and community in a relaxed and welcoming atmosphere. Together, we seek to grow in the grace of the Sacrament of Marriage and support one another in living our vocation with joy and hope.

TEEN PROGRAMMING SURVEY

As we begin working on putting together teen programming in the parish, we want to include as many voices as possible. If you are a caregiver of a high school student, please take a few minutes to fill out the brief survey listed below about teen programming and ask them to do the same. Thank you!

- **Caregiver Survey:** <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdcG7yL6KfRjv1M8FuOTR0wIDTPKzPmsL-LuC46LKLv1a-jAQ/viewform>
- **High School Student Survey:** <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScrmwlASJ6sK2pHNF-9eWPwEhy8F6nCLGBwBrZ13CHOynnWLq/viewform>



COMING UP AT SAINT CECILIA

JULY 26 - 28

SUNDAY, JULY 26

Wisdom & Mature Spirituality | 8:30am via Zoom

The Children's Shroud

After 9:30am & 11:30am Masses | Classroom 1

Marriage Ministry Gathering | 11am | Community Room

Choral Workshop | 2pm | Classroom 1

TUESDAY, JULY 28

Shakespeare On the Common & Parish Potluck

Picnic at 6:30pm | Play at 8pm | Boston Common

THURSDAY, JULY 30

Anna & Simeon Seniors | 10am | Parish Hall

Wisdom & Mature Spirituality | 7:30pm via Zoom



SHAKESPEARE ON THE COMMON & PARISH PICNIC/POTLUCK

**TUESDAY, JULY 28 | PICNIC AT 6:30PM, PLAY AT 8PM
BOSTON COMMON**

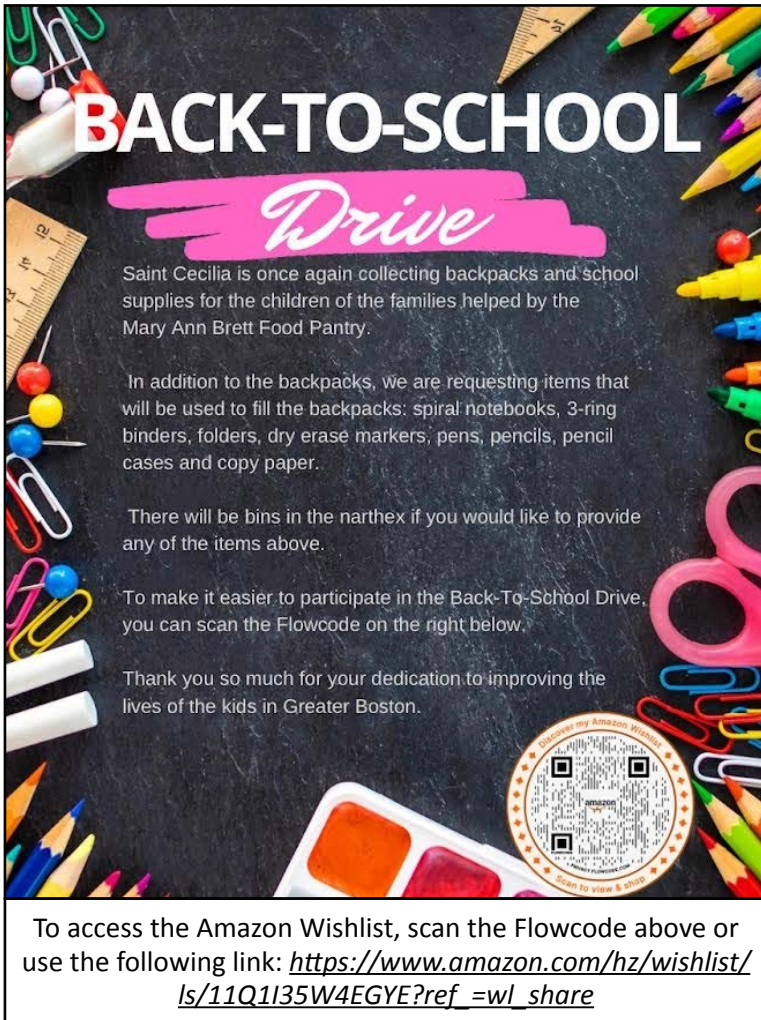
For years, Saint Cecilia parishioners have gathered for a parish picnic/potluck prior to Shakespeare on the Common. This year, we invite you to join us for "A Midsummer Night's Dream," Tuesday July 28 on the Boston Common near the Parkman Bandstand. We'll reserve space and have a potluck picnic beforehand, which is a great opportunity to connect with other parishioners! The picnic is at 6:30 p.m. and the play begins at 8 p.m. For more information, please email Jenny Jones. The play is free, though donations to the Commonwealth Shakespeare Company are appreciated: <http://www.commshakes.org/>.

A REQUEST FROM CATHOLIC CHARITIES

For over 100 years, Sunset Point Camp in Hull 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 letting them 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. **At the moment, there is a particular need for soap, deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrushes, & shampoo for kids at the camp.**

Catholic Charities has also requested donations of sunblock (the higher SPF number, the better) and bug spray. Next time you are shopping or on Amazon.com, please consider picking up a few items from the list above and dropping them in the plastic bin identified for this purpose in the narthex. Thank you!



BACK-TO-SCHOOL
Drive

Saint Cecilia is once again collecting backpacks and school supplies for the children of the families helped by the Mary Ann Brett Food Pantry.

In addition to the backpacks, we are requesting items that will be used to fill the backpacks: spiral notebooks, 3-ring binders, folders, dry erase markers, pens, pencils, pencil cases and copy paper.

There will be bins in the narthex if you would like to provide any of the items above.

To make it easier to participate in the Back-To-School Drive, you can scan the Flowcode on the right below.

Thank you so much for your dedication to improving the lives of the kids in Greater Boston.

To access the Amazon Wishlist, scan the Flowcode above or use the following link: https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/11Q1I35W4EGYE?ref=wl_share

ANNA & SIMEON SENIORS

THURSDAY, JULY 30 | 10AM | PARISH HALL

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

FAR-FLUNG FLOCK COFFEE HOUR: DR. KATHLEEN DOYLE

SUNDAY, AUGUST 2 | 4PM ET VIA ZOOM

Please join us for our coffee hour as we welcome Dr. Kathleen Doyle, a parishioner of Saint Cecilia Church and an integral part of the Louis D Brown Peace Institute. Kathleen was a recent guest on our May coffee hour. She is an attending physician and palliative care doctor at Massachusetts General Hospital. As a palliative care physician and Director of the Harvard Interprofessional Palliative Care Fellowship, Kathleen will offer a presentation on what palliative care is and why it matters. She will explore how palliative care can improve quality of life, support patients and families facing difficult medical decisions, and address the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of people living with serious illness and those who love them.

If you'd like to receive the Zoom link please follow the link below: <https://mailchi.mp/stceciliaboston/far-flung-flock-mailing-list>.

BEREAVEMENT ONLINE

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 5 | 6PM VIA ZOOM

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

SPACE TO SHARE

**WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12 | 6:30PM
COMMUNITY ROOM**

Space to Share is a place for LGBTQ+ parishioners to speak freely about the challenges and joys of being LGBTQ+ and Catholic (or whatever else is on our minds). Whether it's your first visit or you're a biweekly regular, we'd love to have you join us! To learn more, please send an email to the ministry.

HELP US SEND A KID TO CAMP

As you may know, Saint Cecilia Parish has a long-standing relationship with the Huntington YMCA and many of the social service programs offered in that facility. What you may not know is that the Huntington Avenue Y is the oldest in the United States -- celebrating its 175th anniversary this year -- and the cornerstone for the current building was laid by President William Howard Taft in 1912. Through our combined donations, we would like to see if we can collect enough (\$2,500) to send one inner-city kid, ages 8 to 16, to Y camp this summer. The YMCA overnight camp in New Hampshire is a life-changing experience for those fortunate enough to attend.

To make a donation by check -- in any amount -- please make it payable to "YMCA of Greater Boston" and indicate in the memo line: "Summer Camp." Checks should be mailed to:

Mark Lippolt
Saint Cecilia Parish
18 Belvidere Street
Boston, MA 02115

Thanks as always for your customary generosity.

OCIA INFORMATION SESSION

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 19 | 6PM VIA ZOOM

Interested in becoming Catholic? Order of Christian Initiation of Adults The Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA) the primary process for adults to become full members of the Catholic Church. OCIA welcomes inquirers at all levels of knowledge, faith, and intent.

The process culminates in the reception of one or more of the Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, Confirmation, and the Holy Eucharist. OCIA could be for you if you are an adult who has never been baptized, if you were baptized in another Christian denomination, or if you are seeking First Holy Communion and Confirmation.

To learn more or get the Zoom link, please contact Mary Wessel at her parish email.

2026 SUMMER CHOIR SUNDAYS

SUNDAY, AUGUST 23 | 8:30AM | CLASSROOM 1

Join Robert Duff, Brett Maguire and members of the Saint Cecilia Choir at 8:30am to learn a piece of choral music and sing with the choir at the 9:30am Mass. Open to all singers of all ages and experience! We will meet in Classroom 1 at 8:30am.

Catholic Charities Boston Volunteer Opportunities

At Catholic Charities Boston, we have volunteer opportunities that create a lasting impact on our families' journey to self-sufficiency.

We would love for you to join us in Boston!

Yawkey Center Food Pantry

Help restock pantry shelves, assist with product selection, client intake, light cleaning, and helping lift and transport light to moderately heavy items.

Shifts are available Mondays through Saturdays in Dorchester.

English Language Learning

Our adult English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programs seeks volunteer teaching assistants. Teaching experience not required, simply bring your kindness, patience, and willingness to help our clients who are excited to be learning English!

Class schedules vary but include weekday day and evening classes in Dorchester, South Boston, and Roxbury.

Family Shelters

Volunteers can work with children in the programs, support Food Bank deliveries, support our technology initiatives, and/or assist program managers with maintaining the shelters' common areas.

Shifts are available throughout the week in Dorchester and Roxbury.

This Summer:

We seek support for the shelters' Greater Boston Food Bank pick-up and deliveries on the fourth Thursday of each month. Volunteers will meet at our Dorchester shelter, ride along with our team to the Greater Boston Food Bank, and help load the van. Volunteers will then help unload the food at our two Dorchester and Roxbury shelters.

We are also seeking volunteers to assist with a basic computer skills class for adult learners. This includes basic computer literacy, online job applications, resume updates. This opportunity has flexible timing.



Catholic
Charities
BOSTON

Interested in these volunteer opportunities?

Please email Katherine Houston at

katherine_houston@ccab.org to get started!

Saint Cecilia
P A R I S H

Support Our Coffee Hospitality Ministry!

Thank you for your generosity!

*If you're interested in joining
our coffee hospitality ministry,
please contact Lisa Pickering*

WILL AI MAKE YOU HAPPY?

Lessons in misery and bliss from
a roller coaster and a rafting trip

BY ANNA KEATING



Credit: Browns Canyon Rafting

Rafters in Colorado

Great thinkers have disagreed on how to find happiness. Some find it in work, others in leisure. Some say we receive it. Others say we create it. These days, many suggest that artificial intelligence technology promises an easier, and therefore happier, life. But when using A.I. or, really, any addictive app, users often feel disembodied. In these pseudo-places, it is difficult to get one's bearings, to feel real: *Is this my opinion, or am I being manipulated to extremes by the algorithm? Is this image real, or is it A.I.? Do I like this or am I just*

scrolling to numb out? These questions came to the fore recently when I visited, of all places, an amusement park. This summer, I took my children to Elitch Gardens, a theme park and water park in Denver, Colo. My children, ages 8, 11 and 14, had ridden water slides but never roller coasters. My youngest learned about roller coasters from a teacher who used them as an analogy for emotions in his second-grade class.

I picked him up from school that winter day and all he

could talk about was roller coasters. “Have you seen a roller coaster? Are they real? Can we ride one? Can we go today?”

“In summer, when the park reopens,” I promised. For his birthday in spring, we got tickets to Elitch’s, as it is known locally, for June.

I had not been to the park since I was a kid. In my memory, the park was huge, the teenagers were cool, and the best ride was the big wooden roller coaster that moved and swayed at the back of the park. I planned the day for everyone, researching when to get there and where to park. I measured my youngest to make sure he was tall enough to ride the scariest rides. He was, just barely. I thought about what everyone would need: sunscreen, water bottles, snacks. Never once did I think about what the day would be like for me. This was my first mistake.

Elitch’s was smaller than I remembered, and the cool teenagers now looked like little kids. I hurried everyone to the back of the park to ride the old wooden roller coaster. It was closed.

My husband, Geoffrey, came up with a backup plan. His eyes fell on a yellow, metal roller coaster called the Boomerang, the tallest ride in the park. It had several vertical loops and almost no waiting line. Geoffrey caught my eye. He could see that I did not want to ride it. He looked at me and, with his eyes, said, *Don’t act scared or you’ll spook him.*

“Let’s just rip the Band-Aid off,” he said. It’s an expression he often uses when we’re about to do something terrible that must be done. My youngest squeezed my hand and said, “I want to ride next to Mama.” So I got in line.

A teenager pushed a metal bar covered in foam down over my shoulders and the car began to lurch with an ominous clicking sound. My son screamed, “Am I going to die?” I was strapped down and unable to look at him, but I squeezed his leg and said, “You’re not going to die.” By which I meant, not right now.

And then we were hurtling through space. I’d imagined us screaming and laughing, sharing a moment, but I couldn’t even open my eyes, let alone my mouth. It felt like being in a blender. I could not produce a single thought. The machine had us now; there was nothing to do but hold on until it was over.

We got through the loops and the sideways turns, and I started to feel relief, only to realize that we were now going to do the same nauseating series backwards. Finally, we were deposited back on the platform, pale and motion sick. I got out and took my son’s small hand. “You were so brave,” I managed. “That was terrible,” he said, and we all laughed.

I rode a few more rides. The Sea Dragon swung us high

and low in an ersatz Viking ship. My stomach rose and fell. I thought I might pass out. After we got off, I found myself bargaining in my head with no one. *I would rather rock climb without ropes*, I thought. *I would rather give birth. Give me something else. Anything.*

The 8-year-old remained brave as the day wore on. He did not like the first two rides, but he liked the Turn of the Century one, where you spun around on swings. He liked the log ride, where you came off soaking wet. The older rides were better, I thought. Designed to be fun, not to be photographed.

The whole day I told myself, “You never have to do this again.” It wasn’t just the motion sickness; it was the sense of helplessness. Unlike giving birth or doing a sketchy rock climb, riding these roller coasters left me with no sense of accomplishment. My body felt lifeless, like an object being manipulated. The machine did all the work. Each ride offered both too much stimulus and not enough challenge.

It is very easy to describe unhappiness: I was nauseated, hot, bored and overstimulated. Even the kids *liked* Elitch’s but didn’t *love* it.

It’s harder to describe bliss.

The day after we went to Elitch’s, we went rafting. We don’t usually do two big outings in a row, but we are in the midst of a drought in Colorado, and this was the last good weather window before the water levels on the Arkansas River would be too low. So we put some peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and sparkling waters in a cooler and drove to Cañon City to raft the very next morning.

If the day at the amusement park felt like nervous system overload, the day on the river felt like a cleanse. It was one of the happiest days of my life.

Everything about river life is magical. You put your phone in a dry bag and can’t access it for most of the day. You are present. On the river, we are humans; we are able to act on our environment even as it acts on us. You push your arm against a rock and the boat slides back into the flow. On the river, physics is interesting. It makes sense.

We met up with the family we raft with: Luke and his kids.

When we got to the drop-in spot, everyone started helping without being asked: putting on life vests, spraying sunscreen, taking turns pumping up the raft. We had purpose, a mission. The raft had a small leak. Geoffrey, Luke and my oldest set about patching it while the other kids waded in the water and skipped stones. It was a problem, but a problem we could solve. We had the pleasure of feeling competent.

On the river, we are not just bodies, flesh and bones;

we're people. Someone says: "Forward right. Left back. Lean in." And we do. We're not isolated individuals; we're a tribe. Working together, laughing, sitting in comfortable silence. Making jokes about the teenage geese. We tell stories. We paddle. We swim.

At one point we stopped on a sandy bank to eat. Luke's daughter, who is 11, asked me if I wanted to play mermaids. To my surprise, I did. We made up a game of swimming against the current. It was hard and fun, and I couldn't stop grinning. The day was hot; the water was cold. I didn't want to get out.

Rafting creates the conditions for being neighborly. When one of Luke's girls fell in, I had to grab her by the life vest and yank her back into the boat. She fell on top of me in the process, wet and smiling. It felt good to be useful. At another point, I was swimming and rapids were approaching and someone had to pull me in. It felt good to be helped.

The two days were so different. On the first, I got credit simply for participation. I checked something—roller coasters—off a list. On the second, there were real problems to solve. At one point we got stuck on rocks, and two of us had to get out into the rapids and push, but the problems were ours to puzzle over.

It was also healing and restorative to be in nature, surrounded by family and friends, instead of in concrete and steel, surrounded by loud music and strangers. We saw wildlife while on the Arkansas: a herd of bighorn sheep, two egrets, hawks, fish. We cliff jumped. We chose to hurl our bodies off rocks. High, medium or low. Everyone chose differently.

Roller coasters are truly impressive feats of engineering. Yet they remind me of using technology like ChatGPT. They can do incredible things, but they leave many users feeling like they have learned nothing and accomplished little. Amusement parks feel to me like another strange pseudo-space where I begin to ask what is real.

Rafting the same stretch of river year after year might sound boring by comparison, but it returns me to myself. It gives my family a sense of place, of what T. S. Eliot called "significant soil." Here is where we cliff jump. This is our favorite rapid. Here is the bridge where the swallows make their nests out of mud. Look up, but with your mouth closed.

On the river, we were present and experienced beauty. I watched my daughter hurl herself off the highest cliff into the icy river. Later, she was steering the boat. "Okay, we're going into the grass; that happens sometimes," she said, laughing at how hard it was. Only when there is the possibility of failure is there the possibility of success.

The apps and A.I. assistants being foisted on us rob us of the possibility of looking stupid or getting it wrong.

A.I. can summarize the book. It can write the paper. It can catch the stupid grammatical mistake. But maybe happiness is also found in the pleasure of puzzling it out, of coming to understand it, of feeling our power increase, of steering the damn boat.



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Anna Keating writes and podcasts on Substack as "Inner Emigre." She is also the co-author of The Catholic Catalogue: A Field Guide to the Daily Acts That Make Up a Catholic Life and is the co-owner of Keating Woodworks.



Credit: beartfarm.com

Treasure Field #3: Buy the Field by Jim Janknegt



PARISH RESOURCES

Parish Office & Mailing Address

18 Belvidere Street, Boston, MA 02115
Hours | Seven days a week, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
Phone | 617 536 4548; Fax | 617 536 1781
Website | www.stceciliaboston.org

Parish Staff

Rev. John J. Unni, Pastor
Rev. James Shaughnessy, SJ, Pastoral Support
Kate Burns, Director of Family and Youth Faith Formation
Mark Donohoe, Pastoral Associate
Robert Duff, Director of Music
Anastassia Kolchanov, Digital and Print Media Coordinator
Scott MacDonald, Director of Faith Formation and Parish Visibility
Colleen Melaugh, Director of Finance and Development
Nicole Pascarelli O'Brien, Pastoral Director of Operations
Lisa Pickering, Director of Facilities Operations & Events
Mary Wessel, Pastoral Associate

Assisting Clergy

Rev. Peter Grover, OMV
Rev. John Predmore, SJ

Music Ministry

Tyler Cesario, Assistant Director of Music
Daniel Lamoureux, Vigil Organist
Brett Maguire, Parish Organist

Audiovisual Support

Maureen Deery, Parish Photographer & Creator of Weekly Slide Show
Geoffrey Edwards, Livestream Videographer
Christian Chanderdatt, Audio Engineer

Schedule for Liturgy

Wednesday, Thursday, & Friday | 8:00 a.m.
Lord's Day | Sat 5:00 p.m.; Sun 8:00, 9:30*, and 11:30 a.m.
Holy Days | 8:00 a.m.

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

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Father Jim Shaughnessy, SJ is available by appointment for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. To schedule an appointment, please call the Parish Office.

Hearing Assistance in Church

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

For Those with Celiac Disease

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

Parking

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

Building Accessibility

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

Baptism for Infants

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

Faith Formation for Children

To register your child for Faith Formation, contact our Director of Family and Youth Faith Formation, Kate Burns.

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 (erin.t.young@gmail.com) if you have any questions. The Archdiocese of Boston has in place a vigorous program to protect children from harm and to educate its ministers and faithful about the nature of abuse, with a goal of increasing knowledge, creating a safe environment for children, and recognizing and reporting potentially dangerous situations. The full policy is available in the narthex, Parish Office, and on our website.

Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA)

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

Marriage

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

Care of the Sick

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

Order of Christian Funerals

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

Joining Our Community

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

Please note:

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