Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time
31 July 2022

Harvest II
Mark Chandon
31 July 2022

THE 18TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Prelude | Claire de Lune
Louis Vierne
(1870-1937)

Entrance Procession | In Christ There is No East or West
MC KEE

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.
Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will. 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.

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

FIRST READING | Ecclesiastes 1: 2; 2: 21-23

RESPONSORIAL PSALM | Psalm 90: If Today You Hear His Voice

1. You turn man back to dust, and say, “Return, O children of men.”
   To your eyes a thousand years are like yesterday, come and gone, or like a watch in the night.

2. You sweep them away like a dream, like grass which is fresh in the morning.
   In the morning it sprouts and is fresh; by evening it withers and fades.

3. Then teach us to number our days, that we may gain wisdom of heart.
   Turn back, O Lord! How long? Show pity to your servants.

4. At dawn, fill us with your merciful love; we shall exult and rejoice all our days.
   Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us; give success to the work of our hands.

SECOND READING | Colossians 3: 1-5, 9-11

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION | Franciscan Alleluia

GOSPEL | Luke 12: 13-21

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 | Come to the Water

John Foley, S.J.

Eucharistic Prayer

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

* Lift up your hearts.
All: We lift them up to the Lord.

* Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
All: It is right and just.
HOLY, HOLY | Mass of Christ the Savior

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-san-na! Ho-san-na! Ho-san-na in the high-est.

MEMORIAL ACCLAMATION | Mass of Christ the Savior

We pro-claim your Death, O Lord, and pro-fess your Res-

cр-р-)

rea-tion un-til you come a-gain.

GREAT AMEN | Mass of Christ the Savior

A-men, a-men, a-men.

THE LORD’S PRAYER

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

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever.
Amen.
SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

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

ACT OF SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

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

1. For the healing of the nations, Lord, we pray with one accord;
2. Lead us now, Lord, into freedom, For a just and equal sharing world release;
3. All that kills abundant living, That redeemed from war and hatred, earth be banned;
4. You, creator God, have written For our growing in your likeness human kind; Pride of status, race or schooling,

Of the things that earth affords. To a life of All may come and go in peace. Show us how through Dogmas that obscure your plan. In our common Bring the life of Christ to mind: That by our revelation Help us rise and pledge our word. love and action. Care and goodness. Fear will die and hope increase.

POSTLUDE | Fugue from “Prelude and Fugue on a Ukrainian Folk Melody” Nestor Nizhankowsky

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

When someone asks me if I know another priest and they name him I usually respond that if I have never lived with him or heard him preach, I really don’t know him. I believe parishioners want to know their pastor personally and for those who celebrate their faith at church there is the opportunity to meet, have conversation and become friends. I also really enjoy writing a column in the church bulletin each week which provides another opportunity to reveal our thoughts and faith experiences. I realize some priests will not feel comfortable sharing on a personal level, but I truly look forward to sharing this way. And for our parishioners who may want to be able or comfortable coming to church or joining us virtually, the bulletin/webpage is another avenue to connect. Because I read a lot, I am constantly writing down ideas and quotes from authors that challenge me to broaden my horizons and expand my borders. I thought I may share some of those with you this week as we begin our second month together.

“If you ask a naïve child: ‘Do you believe in Santa Claus?’ He or she will say, yes. If you ask a bright child the same question, he or she will say, no. However, if you ask yet an even brighter child that question, he or she will reply, yes…though now for a different reason.”

“You can safely assume you’ve created God in your own image when it turns out God hates all the same people you do.” –Anne Lamott

“The outdoors isn’t a place given to boys and girls by their parents; nature is a place you’re borrowing from your kids.” –Chris Bohjalian, The Lioness

“My point once again is not that those ancient people told literal stories and we are now smart enough to take them symbolically, but that they told them symbolically and we are now dumb enough to take them literally.” –John Dominic Crossen

“Democracy never lasts long. It soon wastes, exhausts and murders itself. There never was a democracy that did not commit suicide.” –John Adams

“The question is not whether the church can convert the world, but whether God can convert the church.” –Paul Stagg (American Baptist Church)

“What good is having the right to sit at a lunch counter if you can’t afford to buy a hamburger?” –Martin Luther King Jr.

“Spirituality is more about whether or not we can sleep at night, than about whether or not we go to church...Irrespective of whether or not we let ourselves be consciously shaped by any explicit religious idea, we act in ways that have us either healthy or unhealthy, loving or bitter. What shapes us is our spirituality.” –Ron Rolheiser, OMI

“Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed unless it is faced.” –James Baldwin

And finally, for those who remember advice columns: “Dear Ann Landers: I am a 16-year-old girl who is a nervous wreck from getting yelled at. All I hear from morning till night is, ‘Stop smoking, get off the phone, hang up your clothes, do your homework, clean up your room.’ How can I get them off my case? Signed, Sick of Parents. Dear Sick: stop smoking, get off the phone, hang up your clothes, do your homework and clean up your room.”

You gotta love it. Enjoy Life!

Father Coyne
MINISTERS OF THE LITURGY

Saturday, July 30 | 5:00 p.m.
Rev. Ron Coyne, celebrant
Pat Scofield, lector

Sunday, July 31 | 8:00 a.m.
Rev. James Shaugnessy, SJ, celebrant
Emily St. Germain, lector

Sunday, July 31 | 9:30 a.m.
Rev. Ron Coyne, celebrant
Moira Macdonald, Kelly McClintock,
and Bob Mann, lectors

Sunday, July 231 | 11:30 a.m.
Rev. Ron Coyne, celebrant
Catherine Horsley & Karen McMenamy, lectors

SPECIAL INTENTIONS

Saturday, July 30 | 5:00 p.m.
John Joseph Lowe & Elouise Lowe, Memorial
Gerald Maloney, Memorial
Eugenia Valente, Third Anniversary

Sunday, July 31 | 9:30 a.m.
Josephine Moitoso, Memorial
Paul Anthony Fitzpatrick, Memorial
Joseph F. Ward, First Anniversary

THIS SUNDAY’S READINGS
Ecclesiastes 1:2; 2:21-23
Colossians 3:1-5, 9-11
Luke 12:13-21

NEXT SUNDAY’S READINGS
Wisdom 18:6-9
Hebrews 11:1-2, 8-19

Join us for July’s Coffee Hour Pop-Up!
Our Coffee Hospitality Ministry is hosting a Coffee Hour Pop-Up today after the 9:30 and 11:30 Masses.
PRAYERS & OCCASIONS

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

Welcome to Saint Cecilia Parish
We are pleased to welcome the following new members of our parish who have recently registered: Jack Dewey of Boston, Catherine Long of Charleston, South Carolina, the Vens Family of Boston, and Louise and Lorne Heslop of Ontario, Canada. If you have not previously registered you can do so online at www.stceciliaboston.org.

Happy Anniversary!
This week we celebrate the baptismal anniversary of Mark Brown who was baptized on July 30. May the Lord continue to bless him with the grace to live out his baptismal call. Happy Feast Day, Mark!

JOIN A COMMUNITY OF CHANGEMAKERS
If you are interested in working with other Catholics on issues that matter both locally and globally, Catholic Relief Services Boston Chapter is open to all newcomers. Catholic Relief Services (CRS) is the international humanitarian agency of the Catholic community in the United States. Our local Massachusetts group works to support the Rice Bowl program which runs during Lent and develops relationships with lawmakers to discuss bills that affect the poor and marginalized. They are also working on a new project to recognize high school students with a social justice certificate. As part of a movement across the United States, thousands are taking meaningful action through CRS campaigns to eradicate global poverty and injustice. The world’s problems are big and complex, but when we come together in faith and action our impact knows no bounds. The group meets once a month on Zoom. Contact Phil Walsh at lupine881@gmail.com or Deacon Tim Donohue at tdbees@gmail.com

COME JOIN THE KNITTING MINISTRY VIRTUALLY THIS SUMMER
This Monday, August 1 | 3:30-4:30 p.m. | Zoom

New to knitting? Join the Community Service Knitting Ministry this summer and earn to make knitted fingerless mitts and knitted caps. These are both travel projects and can be worked anywhere! Once items are completed we will donate them to the Knitting Connection. Seasoned knitters are also welcome! For more information, contact Ann Marie Turo: annmarie@integratedmindandbody.com.

JOIN OUR KNITTING MINISTRY!

WISDOM AND MATURE SPIRITUALITY
The Wisdom and Mature Spirituality Group meets in person on the first Sunday of the month from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m., and on Zoom from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. on all other Sundays. The group is currently reading Cynthia Bourgeault's 2010 work, The Meaning of Mary Magdalene: Discovering the Woman at the Heart of Christianity. In this book, the Rev. Bourgeault takes readers on a journey to discover the real Mary Magdalene—one of the most influential people in the history of Christianity and, arguably, one of Jesus' most important disciples. We will begin Part Three this week: "Mary Magdalene as Unitive Wisdom."

Cynthia Bourgeault is an Episcopal priest, writer, and internationally acclaimed retreat leader. She is a faculty member emeritus of the Center for Action and Contemplation and has been honored as one of the 100 most spiritually influential living people in 2021.

Please RSVP to Deb Garcia for the location, Zoom link, and more information: sc.wisdomandmaturespirituality@gmail.com. Anyone who is in the second half of life is welcome to join our group and we are always happy to welcome new participants.
NEWS FROM THE RACIAL EQUITY TEAM!

AFFINITY GROUPS
Have you heard? We’re taking the feedback from the Racial Equity Survey and putting it into action this summer! One of the initiatives we’re launching right away are affinity groups. What are “affinity groups,” you ask? Good question! Affinity groups are a manner of bringing people together who have a common identity – like race, religion, gender, etc. At St. C’s, we’re going to start with the groups that emerged from our parish-wide survey that can be better included at church: BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color), people with disabilities, and LGBTQ+ people.

These groups will have total autonomy to decide how often to meet, how to meet (in-person or Zoom), what to talk about, etc. They are meant as ways for folks to build community with each other and to provide a space to be able to talk about their faith in the context of these identities. Signups will be open until August 15. Meetings should begin in September.

The affinity groups we are planning to start with:
- Black/African American Affinity
- Asian Affinity
- Latinx Affinity
- Check Other Affinity - for non-white parishioners who feel like the typical race/ethnicity categories offered do not apply to them or are unsure of how to identify themselves
- LGBTQ+ Affinity
- Disabilities Affinity

Sign Up Here: https://tinyurl.com/yc6tn95h

JOIN THE RACIAL EQUITY TEAM
We are also seeking people to join the Race Equity Team (RET). The RET has been behind this whole initiative, and started meeting back in 2020 when George Floyd was murdered. They still meet every other Thursday on Zoom at 7:30 p.m. This group is committed to maintaining at least 50% BIPOC members. The purpose of the RET will be to carry out several objectives from the strategic plan over the next three years, to keep us moving toward becoming an anti-racist parish. To sign up, use this link: https://tinyurl.com/5ce6uhh9

UPCOMING: SPANISH MASS
Querida comunidad,

Con mucha alegría les compartimos que el Equipo de Equidad Racial de Santa Cecilia (RET por sus siglas en inglés) está trabajando para agregar una misa en español en nuestra parroquia. Esta experiencia piloto tendrá lugar en los próximos meses y se puede apuntar aquí para ayudarnos: https://tinyurl.com/3za63u2d.

Gracias por rezar y apoyarnos!

Fraternalmente,
Race Equity Team

*If you have any questions about any of the above, please email Carly Caminiti at ckc1025@gmail.com.
SEEKING EMS FOR MASS GENERAL

Mass General Hospital is seeking Eucharistic ministers to distribute Communion to patients and their families. The commitment would be for 6-8 hours per month (either once weekly for two hours or every other week for three hours.) Parking will be validated. Their greatest need is for Mondays, Fridays, and Sundays. If you are interested in participating in this vital ministry, please reach out to Julie Supple, Spiritual Care Provider. You can call 617-726-2220 or email jsupple@mgh.harvard.edu.

FLOWERS

If you would like to contribute flowers for our sanctuary on a particular Sunday in memory of a loved one or in thanksgiving to God, all you need to do is contact Scott MacDonald (smacdonald@stceciliaboston.org) a few days in advance of the weekend.

PINE STREET’S SUMMER INN THE CITY

Join Pine Street Inn’s Innbassadors for the 10th anniversary of Summer Inn the City. You are invited to take part in this evening of food, drink and fun that connects you with the next generation of leaders in Greater Boston while raising significant funds to benefit Pine Street’s mission to end homelessness.

Saint Cecilia is a proud sponsor of this event which will take place on Tuesday, August 2, from 6 to 9 p.m. It will be held at Artists for Humanity, 100 West 2nd Street, Boston. Tickets are $60/person by July 31; $75/person after July 31. You can register for the event and purchase tickets at: https://www.pinestreetinn.org/about-us/summer-inn-the-city

SUNSET POINT CAMP DONATIONS

For nearly 100 years, Sunset Point Camp, operated by our friends at Catholic Charities, has provided a dream vacation at the seashore to over 40,000 children from low-income, aged 6-13 from Greater Boston. 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 seeking sunscreen donations. So the next time you’re out, please pick up an extra tube of sunscreen and dropping it in the plastic bin identified for this purpose in the narthex. The higher SPF number, the better. They also need kids’ flip-flops for boys and girls ages 6 to 12.

ADULT FAITH FORMATION VIRTUAL EVENTS

ONLINE COURSES

Spiritual Practices
August 3 – August 23 | 3-Week Online Course
Registration Required | $30.00

St. Mary Of Magdala
August 3 – August 30 | 4-Week Online Course
Registration Required | $30.00

For further details or to register for this event, please check the STM Online: Crossroads website: https://www.bc.edu/bc-web/schools/stm/sites/crossroads.html
Thank you so much to everyone who came out to one of Saint Cecilia’s favorite summer traditions, Shakespeare on the Common! We were so glad that Father Coyne joined us for the potluck picnic and the production of *Much Ado About Nothing*. Thank you to Jenny Jones for kindly staking out a fantastic spot and for these lovely photos. In case you missed this, *Much Ado About Nothing* will be performed on the Common until August 7.

**“WELCOMING THE STRANGER” CONTINUES! FURNITURE & VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

We are excited to share that our Paulist Center and Saint Cecilia POWIR site will be supporting a new collaboration: soon we’ll be welcoming an Afghan family of 9 to the West Roxbury neighborhood of Boston.

This group’s most immediate needs are donations of used and new furnishings in good condition, and volunteers to help us on Saturday, August 13. If you have furniture you would like to donate, please check our list of needed items (https://bit.ly/POWIRfurnish) and email Diane at French.diane@gmail.com.

If you would like to volunteer on move-in day (picking up and dropping off donations, loading and unloading furniture, furniture assembly, stocking pantry, making beds), email Talia at sc.socialracialjustice@gmail.com. If you can’t make it on August 13 but still want to help, reach out and we’ll find a job for you!

If you would like to volunteer directly with the family in West Roxbury after they arrive, please sign up at https://bit.ly/POWIRvolunteer and indicate that you are interested in helping the West Roxbury family. Additionally, we still need volunteers for our Dorchester family, especially if you can drive or provide MBTA training. Thank you so much for your continued support!
I’m a Catholic Priest. But please don’t call me Father.

By Jim McDermott, SJ

Bulletin Editor’s Note: America recently launched a national marketing campaign called #OwnYourFaith. This article is part of a series of essays tackling the questions many Catholics are asking about the church and the world.

I have been a priest for almost 20 years, and I have never liked being called “Father.” I dislike it so much that each year on Father’s Day some mischievous members of my family purposely make a point of calling to wish me a Happy Father’s Day. I dislike it so much that I’m afraid more of my family will now start doing the same.

I know: What’s the big deal? It’s like calling your physician “Doctor.” It’s like telling your kids to refer to their friends’ parents as “Mr. and Mrs.” rather than “Tellulah and the Boz.” It’s like referring to the guy in charge of your unit as “Sarge.” It’s just a job title.

Who knows, maybe I would have the same trouble in those situations. (Who doesn’t want to be called “Tellulah” or “The Boz?”) But I think the title of “Father” is a little bit different. Part of my trouble with the term is the amount of respect that automatically comes with it, the authority that is instantly granted to priests. After I was ordained, Catholics who were much older and more accomplished than me, people who did not even know me, were suddenly talking to me with a deference I could not understand and definitely did not deserve. And “Father” was just one part of this package: I can’t tell you how many times I’ve had people apologize for cursing or slips of the tongue. “You should come have a drink at my community,” I’ve wanted to say to them.

And it’s not just strangers who adopt the term either. It’s college pals who knew me when I used to ride around campus on a ten speed with no brakes while unironically wearing a bucket hat, black trenchcoat and Batman pin. It’s relatives who once emptied my diapers and know I got grounded for trying to trick a neighbor kid into paying $100 for my old “Star Wars” trading cards. These are people who know me far too well to treat me like I’m anything special.

It’s true, I’ve taken vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, and I’ve done some interesting and hopefully meaningful things in my life. But I am also a guy who spends way too much time thinking about “Star Wars,” Jeff Goldblum and the future of the Marvel Cinematic Universe. (Come to me, my X-Men.) And while I take being a priest seriously, I’ve also lost jobs, screwed up friendships and recently received my Ph.D. in nursing a grudge. (I’m a 52-year-old Scotch-Irish Virgo. It comes with the territory.) I’d like to think I’m worth having a conversation with. But your confidence? Your faith? Take your time.

My dislike of the title isn’t coming from any lack of self-esteem, either. (Did I not mention, I am a Jesuit.) I think not calling me Father is in your best interest. Before I got ordained, I worked as a teacher at Red Cloud Indian School on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. The people were fantastic and respectful, but few of them rushed to put too much faith in a new Jesuit coming to work there. They’d all had too many past experiences of the dumb things we say and do (and I did). Instead, I had to earn their respect. And it was hard; it forced me to confront my own blind spots and failings. But that made me a better teacher and eventually, I hope, a better person.

We’re raised to think that priests are worthy of the utmost regard, but in fact people in the church today have just as many reasons to be cautious or skeptical of clergy as my students did of me. The church’s history of abuse and cover-up, clerical expressions of privilege and stories of clerics putting ideology or political agendas ahead of pastoral care all have undermined the legitimacy of our role as leaders.

So don’t hesitate to, well, hesitate. Make us prove we’re worthy of your trust before you give it. That’s not being judgmental or unfair,
just prudent. Your choice to take it slow might even empower those around you to realize they have the right to ask the same.

Here’s the other thing I don’t like about being called “Father”: The term draws an unhelpful distinction between we who are priests from everyone else in the church. Religious education instructors are generally not called “Teacher”; the Social Ministries Director of your parish is not “Disciple” or the maintenance person “the Czar of Clean.” So why give me a title? My first name works just as well as theirs do. And even though I’m standing in the place of Christ during sacramental activities, our belief remains that it is Christ doing the work, not me. And aren’t all of us called to be Christ in the actions of our daily lives?

My connection with God is not somehow magically deeper than yours. Most clergy don’t have visions or hear voices. I am also not nicer than anyone else or more generous; ask my family or friends.

I’m not trying to dismiss the gift that a good priest can be in a community. I just want to point out, so is a good woman religious, a good music director, a good high school theology teacher, a good deacon, an active women’s auxiliary and that one older couple who has been coming to the parish for the last 60 years. Clericalism has been a part of our church for so many centuries that I think it’s very hard for us to recognize the full extent of it even when it’s right there in front of us. I’m sure that most people think they are just doing what they’re supposed to when they call me Father or when they refrain from telling me that my homily was terrible and, by the way, I look like an unmade bed. But really I could use their help to keep me from making those mistakes.

I still hear far too many stories of priests going to new parishes and making changes as soon as they get there, consulting with no one and acting more like a landlord than a leader. To my mind, that’s where all the “Yes, Father” deference leads us, to guys who abuse their authority and think it’s O.K.

When it comes down to it, if you want to call me Father, I won’t argue with you. My job is to accept you as you are, not to make you agree with me. But I hope that you’d use the title with the knowledge that we are fellow pilgrims. Because we will all be a lot better off when fewer distinctions are made between us clergy and everyone else. I get it; our lives seem weird. (O.K., maybe our lives are weird.) But fundamentally we’re just people trying to follow Jesus and be good to others in our own messy, imperfect ways. Sometimes the best show of respect for someone is not putting them on a pedestal, but rather letting them walk beside you on this crazy road.

~ Jim McDermott, S.J., is an associate editor at America.
SAINT CECILIA PARISH

PARISH RESOURCES

Parish Office & Mailing Address
18 Belvidere Street, Boston, MA 02115

Hours | Monday–Friday, 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m. & by Appointment
Phone | 617 536 4548; Fax | 617 536 1781
E-mail | info@stceciliaboston.org
Website | www.stceciliaboston.org

Parish Staff
Rev. John J. Unni, Pastor
Rev. Ron Coyne, Parochial Administrator
Rev. James Shaughnessy, SJ, Pastoral Support
Keith Brinkley, Mike Currier, Rudy Flores, Parker Olson,
Corey Ortiz, Reception
t reception@stceciliaboston.org
Mark Donohoe, Pastoral Associate
mdonohoe@stceciliaboston.org
Robert Duff, Director of Music
rduff@stceciliaboston.org
Giovanna Franchi, Pastoral Minister
gfranchi@stceciliaboston.org
Scott MacDonald, Director of Faith Formation and Parish Visibility
smacdonald@stceciliaboston.org
Colleen Melaugh, Director of Finance
cmelaugh@stceciliaboston.org
Thomas Mellan, Organist
tmellan@stceciliaboston.org
Lisa Pickering, Director of Facilities and Events
lpickering@stceciliaboston.org

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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 $11, available on Sundays until 3:00 p.m., and $14 after 4:00 every day of the week. To take advantage of this discount, ask one of our greeters for a chaser ticket at Mass or ask a staff person during the week. Chaser tickets must be used at the machine at the exit gate. To obtain the discount, first place the ticket you received upon entering the garage into the machine, then follow it with the chaser ticket.

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