

Saint Cecilia Church

Rectory: 170 Mechanic Street Leominster, Massachusetts

Telephone (978) 537-6541 / 537-6542 / 537-6543

Parish Website: stceciliachurch.net / Like St Cecilia's Church on Facebook

Parish Office Hours are Monday thru Thursday 9 am - 5 pm and Friday 9 am - 4 pm

Religious Education (C.C.D) Office Telephone (978)537-5596

Bingo Telephone: (978)537-5596

March 22, 2020 - Fourth Sunday of Lent

Rev. Robert D. Brusco
Pastor

Rev. Mateus Souza
Associate Pastor

Deacon Ronald J. Aubuchon
Deacon Robert S. Connor, Jr.



Mrs. Paula Doucet
Director of Religious Education

Mr. David M. Lasky
Organist



A Message From Our Pastor.

Dear Friends,

I don't think any one of us could have imagined a time when all Masses would be cancelled, and yet we are faced with that harsh reality. Bishop McManus, knowing how central to the Faith of Catholics is the celebration of the Eucharist and the reception of Holy Communion, was the last bishop in Massachusetts to

bow to the inevitable.

In addition, funerals may be held, but with no more than 15 people in attendance. Families may decide to have a graveside service with a funeral Mass after the crisis has passed. Weddings will be limited to 20 guests.

Eucharistic ministers will no longer be bringing Communion to the homebound unless the person needs the Anointing of the Sick. Visitors will not be allowed in the hospitals, so Communion will only be distributed by hospital chaplains.

The church will be open all daylight hours for private prayer and Adoration. The rectory will be closed, however. You may call the rectory, but you will not be able to come in.

Until this scourge passes, let us pray for all those who have contracted this virus, and for all of our heroic health care workers. May God have mercy on us all.

God bless you,

Fr. Bob Brusco



My dear friends in Christ,

As we confront almost hourly news reports about rising cases of Coronavirus, additional measures to restrict exposures to the threat of this insidious virus, and concerns about our own health and the wellbeing of our loved ones, we can become very anxious. Yet we are a people of hope, grounded in the faith that God is always with us. As your bishop, I write to you today in these troubling times to remind you of this unshakeable tenet of our Catholic faith.

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, in his encyclical *Spe Salvi* (Saved by Hope) stressed how the virtue of hope is critical for anyone who encounters suffering: “[T]he present, even if it is arduous, can be lived and accepted if it leads towards a goal, if we can be sure of this goal, and if this goal is great enough to justify the effort of the journey” (*Spe Salvi* 1). What is that goal for us today? I propose that our first goal is to maintain a courageous spirit of optimism and perseverance during this health crisis. We are responsible for being good stewards of our bodies and for following the advice of medical professionals to minimize risk. By virtue of our baptism we are also called as good citizens to care for others in need, in good times and in bad.

In *Spe Salvi*, Benedict XVI noted that “It is not science that redeems man: Man is redeemed by love. This applies even in terms of this present world. . . . The human being needs unconditional love. He needs the certainty which makes him say: “neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 8:38-39). (SS26)

As people of faith, let us not lose sight of the fact that our ultimate goal is life eternal, to one day enjoy God’s life and love eternally. That love is experienced even in this life when we are cared for in times of sickness with compassion, and we in turn become agents of God’s love when we help others in need.

So what can we do? I suggest we consider three things: Pray, Listen and Respond.

Pray the *Prayer In Time of Pandemic* which we are sharing through our parishes and institutions. Why? Prayer will ground us in the realization that, first of all, we are not alone. Even when seemingly no one else hears us in our pleas, God always hears us. It reminds us that the truly important things in life are bigger than us and we must set aside our pride to focus on what is truly important in life.

Listen and Respond. Our faith reminds us that grace builds on nature. If we are attentive to the instructions of those around us we will be given the grace to respond. Hence, we must be attentive to the advice of healthcare professionals to protect ourselves but we must also be attentive to the spiritual, emotional and physical needs of others. Pope Francis has observed that his greatest concern regarding how this crisis is unfolding in Italy is that of isolation. Feeling alone and feeling abandoned engender fear, not hope. Are young and elderly family members scared or at risk and need our assurances and help? Are neighbors alone and in need of wellness checks so as to not feel abandoned?

As baptized members of the Body of Christ, we also have a responsibility to the greater community of faith. In the weeks ahead, our faith life may be greatly challenged by not being able to attend Mass. We will have to fast from the very sustenance for which our souls yearn during this Lent, the Holy Eucharist. Again I stress - do not lose hope. As your parishes communicate with you, I hope they will remind you that you can at least pray together with the Catholic community in our diocese through our Sunday and Daily Masses on the internet and on Spectrum (Charter) Channel 193. You may also have access to the Mass on Catholic TV from Boston if you are on a different cable company or satellite TV. You can make a Spiritual Communion as you spiritually prepare for the day, God willing, when you can return to the Banquet of the Lord at Easter.

As members of the Diocese of Worcester, I also implore you not to lose sight of how we are serving so many people in need every day through our parish ministries and our diocesan agencies. Your call to be

good stewards through the parish offertory is needed now as much as ever, as well as your continued support for the annual Partners in Charity Appeal which is a lifeline for diocesan-wide service to thousands of people who are physically and spiritually in need. However, in light of these difficult times, I have suspended the activities of our diocesan capital campaign, Legacy of Hope, until these difficult times are behind us, in order to stay focused on addressing present needs. I encourage you to take advantage of online giving portals for your parish and Partners in Charity or simply continue to support your offertory by mail.

In closing, I ask that you join me in the following *Prayer in Time of Pandemic* and that you do so every day until this health crisis has passed.

O God, whose Only Begotten Son bore the weight of human suffering for our salvation, hear the prayers of your Church for our sick brothers and sisters and deliver us from this time of trial. Open our ears and our hearts to the voice of your Son: Be not afraid, for I am with you always. Bless all doctors and nurses, researchers and public servants; give us the wisdom to do what is right and the faith to endure this hour, that we might gather once again to praise your name in the heart of your Church, delivered from all distress and confident in your mercy. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

May God protect you and your loved ones through this time of trial.

With every prayerful best wish, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Robert J. McManus
Bishop of Worcester

OUR LADY, HEALTH OF THE SICK, PRAY FOR US

Please pray for those who are ill, especially:

Claire Babineau, Florence Comeau, Gilles Comeau, John Gallant, Dennis Holman, Mary Lasky, Ginette LeBlanc, Georgette Lorenzetti, Dee Lucas, Riley Watts and Fr. Bob Brusco. If you know someone who needs prayers, call the rectory and we will add them to our list for a month.



My husband, Dave, and I have been administering the Lenten Canned Food Drive at St. Cecilia Parish for many years. We have always been amazed and humbled by the generosity of our fellow parishioners. This past weekend, however, really stood out and warmed our hearts in a special way.

With all the media focus on COVID-19, the uncertainty of food supplies in the future, and attention given to hoarders we wondered how the food drive would be impacted. Well, any questions we had were answered by the overflowing collection barrels in the church all weekend! It was truly a testimony to the Catholic Christian spirit of unity that in such uncertain times our fellow parishioners rose to the occasion and supplied Catholic Charities with a generous amount of everything that was on the list for week 3 of the drive, including hand soap. As always, these donated goods will be distributed to the less fortunate and most vulnerable people in our community.

Although Mass will not be celebrated in the immediate future, we will continue to put the barrels out on the weekend for anyone who would like to contribute for weeks 4 & 5. God bless you all for your kindness and generosity in these trying times.



Wright-Roy Funeral Home

109 West Street Leominster

978-534-9372
www.wrightroyfuneralhome.com

CHOICE
INSURANCE AGENCY, INC
Call Parishioner Brian P. Allain
978-343-4853
376 Summer Street Fitchburg

Legere Auto Home Business
INSURANCE AGENCY, INC
978-534-8329
David Pelletier: Parishioner
165 Mechanic Street, Leominster
www.legereins.com

**LIFE CARE CENTER
OF LEOMINSTER**
Skilled Nursing & Rehabilitation Facility

Contact Our
Admissions Department

PH 978-537-0771
FX 978-537-8421

**PROTECT GOD'S
PRECIOUS INFANTS**

**END ABUSE
END ABORTION**

Joe O'Donnell
Tax & Pension
978-840-1040

Simard Funeral Home
Serving the Residents of Leominster since 1906.

Kevin J. Mack Funeral Director
14 Walker Street Leominster 978-534-8420

BRIDEAU
SMARTER HEATING & COOLING

800-880-9780
BrideauEnergy.com

HEATING OIL, PROPANE AND 24 HOUR HEATING SERVICE

Proud to have scored a
Deficiency-Free SURVEY
on the annual State Review!

★★★★★ 5 Star Quality Care is Closer Than You Think

River Terrace Rehabilitation and Healthcare Center
Deficiency-free State Survey 2016 & 2017
Cardiopulmonary Rehab program overseen by specialty physicians
Short-term Rehab & Long-term Care
1675 Main St., Lancaster, MA | Tel: 978-365-4537 | www.riverterracerehab.com

841 Main Street
Tewksbury, MA 01876
(978) 851-9103

Rosaries from Flowers
"Handmade from the Flowers
of your Loved One"
www.rosariesfromflowers.com

**Regonini Zoll
Memorials**

CEMETERY LETTERING
MARKERS • MONUMENTS

978.368.7539
626 MAIN ST. • CLINTON MA 01510

Volunteer With Us!
IF YOU ARE COMPASSIONATE,
CARING, LOVING

As a hospice volunteer, you can assist with a variety of activities from visiting patients, playing games or providing grief support.

Auburn: 508-845-2379
patricia.larochelle@compassus.com

Compassus®
Serving with Heartful Compassion
Veterans! Please consider our Vet-to-Vet Volunteer Program!

Memorial Ads
Available 617-779-3771

BINGO
Every Friday Night
at St. Cecilia's Parish Center
188 Mechanic Street, Leominster

- 2 Winner-take-all games • Air Conditioned
- 20 \$10 Door Prizes • 2 Progressive Games

Doors Open @ 4:00 Bingo Starts @ 6:30

Crystal CLEANERS
978-534-0006

**Mediation Services of
North Central MA, Inc.**

A non-profit conflict resolution service agency
CONTACT US TO LEARN MORE about
what we do and how you can help bring
peace to the community!

978-466-9595 or
mediationncm.org

**AD SPACE
AVAILABLE**
617-779-3771

"God is Love" 1 John 4:8

**SUPPORT LOCAL
BUSINESS**

When patronizing our Sponsors
let them know you saw them in the
Church Bulletin.

Michael McLaughlin
REALTOR®
63 Merriam Avenue
Leominster, MA 01453
Cell: 978-407-7911
mmclaughlin@LAERrealty.com

Brenda Albert
REALTOR®
63 Merriam Avenue
Leominster, MA 01453
Cell: 978-621-3168
BALbert@LAERrealty.com

LAER REALTY PARTNERS™
Office: 978-534-3100
www.URHomeTeam.com

😊 **SAVE A LIFE** 😊

KIDNEY TRANSPLANT DONOR NEEDED
BLOOD TYPE "O" POSITIVE
CONTACT: SAVELICIA@GMAIL.COM

The Roar That Opens More Doors

Equal Housing Opportunity, REALTOR, MLS

STAND OUT Color Advertising
617-779-3771