

SAINT CECILIA'S CHURCH

The Transfiguration, by Fra Angelico



GUEST COLUMN FROM POPE FRANCIS

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The Gospel of the Transfiguration is proclaimed every year on the Second Sunday of Lent. During this liturgical season, the Lord takes us with him to a place apart. While our ordinary commitments compel us to remain in our usual places and our often repetitive and sometimes boring routines, during Lent we are invited to ascend “a high mountain” in the company of Jesus and to live a particular experience of spiritual discipline – asceticism – as God’s holy people.

Lenten penance is a commitment, sustained by grace, to overcoming our lack of faith and our resistance to following Jesus on the way of the cross. This is precisely what Peter and the other disciples needed to do. To deepen our knowledge of the Master, to fully understand and embrace the mystery of his salvation, accomplished in total self-giving inspired by love, we must allow ourselves to be taken aside by him and to detach ourselves from mediocrity and vanity. We need to set out on the journey, an uphill path that, like a mountain trek, requires effort, sacrifice and concentration. These requisites are also important for the synodal journey to which, as a Church, we are committed to making. We can benefit greatly from reflecting on the relationship between Lenten penance and the synodal experience.

In his “retreat” on Mount Tabor, Jesus takes with him three disciples, chosen to be witnesses of a unique event. He wants that experience of grace to be shared, not solitary, just as our whole life of faith is an experience that is shared. For it is in togetherness that we follow Jesus. Together too, as a pilgrim Church in time, we experience the liturgical year and Lent within it, walking alongside those whom the Lord has placed among us as fellow travelers. Like the ascent of Jesus and the disciples to Mount Tabor, we can say that our Lenten journey is “synodal”, since we make it together along the same path, as disciples of the one Master. For we know that Jesus is himself the Way, and therefore, both in the liturgical journey and in the journey of the Synod, the Church does nothing other than enter ever more deeply and fully into the mystery of Christ the Saviour.

And so we come to its culmination. The Gospel relates that Jesus “was transfigured before them; his face shone like the sun and his clothes became white as light” (Mt 17:2). This is the “summit”, the goal of the journey. At the end of their ascent, as they stand on the mountain heights with Jesus, the three disciples are given the grace of seeing him in his glory, resplendent in supernatural light. That light did not come from without, but radiated from the Lord himself. The divine beauty of this vision was incomparably greater than all the efforts the disciples had made in the ascent of Tabor. During any strenuous mountain trek, we must keep our eyes firmly fixed on the path

Franciscus



Please pray for those who are ill, especially:

José Dhiogo, Jenn, Doris, Elena, Doris Maillet, Stephanie Matthews, Jeannine Reid and Dick "The Barber" Fontaine. If you know someone who needs prayers, call the rectory or email us at office@stceciliachurch.net and we will add them to our list for a month or so.

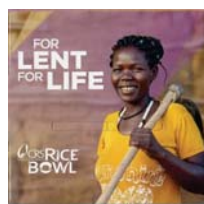


The Lenten Food Drive is off to a great start due to the generosity of the parishioners of Saint Cecilia's. Catholic Charities is extremely grateful.

Next weekend we will be collecting: **canned fruits, canned juice, bars of soap, cereal (boxed or instant), pancake mix, Bisquick, and maple syrup.**

OPERATION RICE BOWL

Pick up your "Rice Bowl" to benefit the poor and the hungry. Seventy-five percent of the proceeds will be distributed by Catholic Relief Services to support life-saving programs in over one hundred countries. Twenty-five percent of your donations will be used in programs to alleviate hunger and poverty in the Diocese of Worcester.



Wednesday Lenten Soup Supper Serving 4:30pm - 6:30pm

This week's menu:
Minestrone Soup



Free will offerings will be accepted for the benefit of the St. Vincent de Paul

LEOMINSTER LENTEN CONFESSION FINDER

Monday

5:30pm - Saint Leo

Tuesday

8:30am - Saint Anna

6:00pm - Saint Anna

Thursday

6:30pm - Saint Cecilia

Friday

7:00pm - Our Lady of the Lake

Saturday

9:30am - Saint Cecilia

10:00am - Holy Family

2:30pm - Saint Leo

3:00pm - Saint Cecilia

LEOMINSTER LENTEN WEEKDAY MASS FINDER

Monday

6:30am - Saint Cecilia

7:30am - Saint Anna

8:00am - Our Lady of the Lake

8:30am - Saint Leo

Tuesday

6:30am - Saint Cecilia

7:30am - Saint Anna

8:00am - Our Lady of the Lake

8:30am - Saint Leo

Wednesday

6:30am - Saint Cecilia

7:30am - Saint Anna

8:00am - Our Lady of the Lake

8:00am - Holy Family

4:00pm - Saint Cecilia

Thursday

7:30am - Saint Anna

8:00am - Holy Family

8:30am - Saint Leo

9:00am - Saint Cecilia

6:00pm - Saint Cecilia

Friday

8:00am - Holy Family

8:30am - Saint Leo

9:00am - Saint Cecilia

5:30pm - Holy Family

Saturday

9:00am - Saint Cecilia



Congratulation to **Andrew Edmund Kelly** who was recently baptized. Welcome to our parish family!

**Last Weekend's Collection
was \$8,340.58.
Thank You!**

"Go forth from the land of your kinsfolk and from your father's house to a land that I will show you." (Genesis 12:1)

God calls all of us to leave behind our old ways and to follow Him, placing our complete trust in Him. Some of the old ways that we struggle to leave behind might be materialism, selfishness and greed. Yet, God promises to show us a new land and a better way to live. Remember what Saint Teresa of Calcutta said, "God does not call us to be successful, God calls us to be faithful."

Chowderfest

**Friday, March 10
from 5 pm - 7:30 pm**



at Our Lady of the Lake,
1400 Main Street, Leominster.

Menu includes Clam, Fish, or Corn Chowder, Macaroni & Cheese, corn bread, crackers, bread, water, soda, coffee, tea, and desserts.

Tickets: Adults \$10, Children (6-12) \$5.
Take out is available as well.

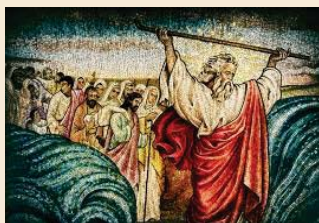
Classes starting this week, contact Pat Secino at the Rectory 978-537-6541 to register.

Confirmation Classes for Adults



Confirmation is the completion of Baptism, the giving of the full power of a Christian. "Confirmation" means a strengthening – this sacrament strengthens and increases what we receive at Baptism, particularly the power of bearing witness to Christ. If you or someone you know that has not received the Sacrament of Confirmation, classes will begin on **Wednesday, March 8th from 6:30-7:30 PM in the Parish Center**. Adults must be over the age of 18, baptized and have made First Communion to attend this class.

Bible Study



We will begin our Bible Study on Thursday, March 9th from 9:30-11:00am in the Parish Center on the **Study of Exodus Part II**. Beginning with the insecurity of the desert wanderings, to encountering God on Mt. Sinai and the construction of the tent dwelling, God's people will learn what it means to be part of the covenant with the one who liberates and also gives the law to guide and direct them.



HELPING BETHLEHEM



Next weekend, March 11th and 12th, Maysoon Khair of Star of Bethlehem handicrafts will be in the vestibule with carved olive wood religious handicrafts made by the students of the **School of Joy**, a school for children with learning difficulties located just outside Bethlehem. Whatever you purchase will go directly to helping Christian families in Bethlehem and the important work of the school. Thank you for your generosity!

THANK YOU!

Ash Wednesday was such a great start to Lent with more than six hundred people taking part in the three Masses.

Thank you, as well, for your generous support of priest retirement. We collected \$1,254 for this important Diocesan Appeal.

A CONCISE INTRODUCTION TO THE SACRED LITURGY

with Monsignor James P. Moroney

TUESDAYS 7:00pm - 8:30pm Live **and** via ZOOM

PREREGISTER BY EMAILING tempio@aol.com

Pre-registration is required and a donation of \$25 is requested, although not required. A copy of the book *The Mass Explained* will be provided to each participant.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE LITURGY

MARCH 21st 7:00-8:30pm

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE LITURGY

MARCH 28th 7:00-8:30pm

LITURGICAL BOOKS AND LITURGICAL LAW

APRIL 4th 7:00-8:30pm

THE LITURGICAL RENEWAL OF VATICAN II

APRIL 11th 7:00-8:30pm

THE MASS EXPLAINED I

APRIL 18th 7:00-8:30pm

THE MASS EXPLAINED II

APRIL 25th 7:00-8:30pm



Pastor of Saint Cecilia Parish in Leominster, Massachusetts, Monsignor Moroney is former Executive Director of the Secretariat for the Liturgy of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, consultant to the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, and Professor of liturgical studies and Rector of Saint John's Seminary in Boston. He has given workshops to more than 20,000 priests and deacons in most of the dioceses of the United States and is author of *The Mass Explained* (Catholic Book, 2008).



Second Sunday of Lent

March 5, 2023

TRANSFIGURATION AND TRANSUBSTANTIATION



What was the Transfiguration? Was it the change of Jesus into something he was not, or was it the revelation of who Jesus really was, as he is revealed to his disciples in dazzling light as the Son of God in whom his Father is well pleased?

Just as the Transfiguration was the manifestation of Christ's glory to his disciples, so too the Holy Eucharist allows us to partake of the glory we shall know with him at the Heavenly Banquet. The closing prayer for today's Mass describes it:

As we receive these glorious mysteries,
we make thanksgiving to you, O Lord,
for allowing us while still on earth
to be partakers even now of the things of heaven.

In a very real sense, all time and space disappear at Mass, as we receive the Bread of Angels while still on earth. We sit at the Heavenly Banquet, with the Lord truly present in our midst. We gather at the altar of the Lamb with all the Saints as a Royal Priesthood, a Holy Nation, God's own Chosen.

That is why the priest does not just invite us to come to Communion, but to answer a call to the Supper of the Lamb!

The Mass, then, is a foretaste of heaven, in which we literally taste the Body and Blood of the Lord. In the words of the ancient prayer we pray at the conclusion of the Solemnity of *Corpus Christi*: "Grant, O Lord, we pray, that we may delight for all eternity in that share in your divine life, which is foreshadowed in the present age by our reception of your Precious Body and Blood."¹

¹ Prayer after Communion for the Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ.

THIS WEEK AT SAINT CECILIA



Saturday March 4 Vigil *Breaking Bread, page 76*

3:00pm Confessions (Church)
4:00pm Mass for Herve Poirier, by Yvette Richard (Church)

Sunday March 5 Second Sunday of Lent *Breaking Bread, page 76*

7:00am Mass for Rita M. Daigle, by Marie Germaine Richard (Church)
9:45am Mass for Joanne Morrissey by Patrick and Janice Goguen (Church)
 9:30am-11:00am RCIA Group (Rectory)
 9:45am-11:00am Catechist of the Good Shepherd, and other classes through Grade six (Parish Center)
11:15am Mass for Rita, Ben and George Daigle, by the family (Church)

Monday March 6 Lenten Weekday

6:30am Mass for Charles and Mildred Bilodeau, by last will (Chapel)
 3:00pm Rosary and Divine Mercy Novena (Chapel)
 7:00pm - 8:15pm Grades Seventh thru Tenth Religious Education (Parish Center)

Tuesday March 7 Saints Perpetua and Felicity

6:30am Mass for Parishioners of Saint Cecilia Parish (Chapel)
 3:00pm Rosary and Divine Mercy Novena (Chapel)
 4:00pm - 5:30pm Sacramental Prep Class A (Parish Center)
 7:00pm - *Discovering Christ: An Inquiry and Meditation*, with Monsignor Kelly (Rectory)

Wednesday March 8 Saint John of God

6:30am Mass for Richard H.J. Brow, by last will (Chapel)
 3:00pm Rosary and Divine Mercy Novena (Chapel)
4:00pm Mass for Father Gerard P. Walsh (2nd anniv.) (Chapel)
 6:30pm - Leominster Parish Mission - Taizé Prayer (Holy Family of Nazareth Church)
 6:30pm - 7:30pm Adult Confirmation Class (Parish Center)
 7:00pm Rosary (Chapel)

Thursday March 9 Saint Frances of Rome

9:00am Mass for Father Robert E. Kelly (4th anniv.) (Chapel)
 9:30am - 11:00am Bible Study - Exodus II (Parish Center)
 3:00pm Rosary and Divine Mercy Novena (Chapel)
6:00pm Mass for Brian and Ann Schaefer, by Don and Linda Schaefer (Chapel)
 6:30pm Confessions (Church)

Friday March 10 Lenten Weekday

9:00am Mass for Joseph G. LeBlanc and Norman LeBlanc by a friend (Chapel)
 Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament follows Mass
 Noon Benediction with the Blessed Sacrament (Chapel)
 3:00pm Rosary and Divine Mercy Novena (Chapel)
 5:00 pm Wedding Rehearsal for Thomas McKenney and Caitlin Peters
 6:00pm Stations of the Cross (Church)
 6:30pm BINGO (Parish Center) Doors open 4pm; Game starts 6:30pm

Saturday March 11 Lenten Weekday

9:00am Mass for Father Joseph A. Moynaham (13th anniv.) (Chapel)
 9:30am Confessions (Church)
 9:30am - 10:30am Penance Service for Grades 2 - 6 (Church)
 2:00pm - Wedding of Thomas McKenney and Caitlin Peters (Church)

Saturday March 11 Vigil

Breaking Bread, page 77

3:00pm Confessions (Church)
4:00pm Mass for Thomas Tuttle (9th anniv.), by his wife, Carol (Church)

Sunday March 12 Second Sunday of Lent

Breaking Bread, page 77

7:00am Mass for Roland Lortie (2nd anniv.), by friend, Larry Gladding (Church)
9:45am Mass for Anna Laverdiere, by her children (Church)
 9:30am-11:00am RCIA Group (Rectory)
 9:45am-11:00am Catechist of the Good Shepherd, and other classes through (Parish Center)
11:15am Mass for Paul Roy (4th anniv.), by Jeannette and Lesley (Church)

A NEW SONG FOR LENT

QUIETLY, PEACEFULLY

Antonin Dvořák
 Words and Adapt. Lori True



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