



Saint Cecilia Parish

SAINT CECILIA PARISH

170 Mechanic Street, Leominster, Massachusetts 01453 — 978-537-6541 — stceciliachurch.net

Office Hours: Monday through Friday from 10am to 3pm.



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Jamie Camire

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Deacon Ronald J. Aubuchon, Deacon emeritus

Weekend Masses: Vigil Mass 4:00pm Saturday, Sunday Masses at 7:00am, 9:45am and 11:15am.

Weekday Masses: Monday through Saturday at 9:00am; Wednesday at 6:00pm.

Sacrament of Penance: Wednesday at 6:30pm, Thursday at 9:30am, Saturday at 9:30am and 3:00pm.

Rosary: Monday through Friday at 3:00pm; Wednesday at 7:00pm.

Eucharistic Adoration: Wednesdays and Fridays from 9:30am to noon.



WITH THE HELP OF SAINT CECILIA PASTORAL REFLECTIONS



Our Guest Columnist today is Pope Leo XIV, who reflects on the Nativity Scene and its importance for our lives.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Eight hundred years ago, at Christmas in 1223, Saint Francis organized the living Nativity scene in Greccio. While Nativity scenes are being prepared or completed in homes and other places, it is good for us to rediscover their origins.

How did the crib come about? What was Saint Francis' intention? He said: "I want to depict the Child born in Bethlehem, and in some way see with the eyes of the body the hardships in which He found Himself for want of the things necessary for an infant, how He was laid in a manger and how He lay on the straw between the ox and the donkey." Francis does not want to create a beautiful work of art, but rather to arouse amazement through the Nativity scene, at the extreme humility of the Lord, at the hardships he suffered in the poor grotto of Bethlehem for love of us. In fact, the biographer of the Saint of Assisi notes, "In that moving scene, evangelical simplicity shines forth, poverty is praised, humility is related. And Greccio has become like a new Bethlehem."

I've emphasized one word, "amazement". And this is important. If we Christians look at the crib as a beautiful thing, as something historical, even religious, and pray, this is not enough. Before the mystery of the Incarnation of the Word, before the birth of Jesus, we need this religious attitude of amazement. If in the face of the mysteries, I do not come to this amazement, my faith is simply superficial, a "computational faith". Do not forget this.

And one characteristic of the Nativity scene is that it was conceived as a school of simplicity. And this has a great deal to say to us. In fact, the risk of losing sight of what counts in life is great today. Paradoxically, it increases precisely at Christmas — the mentality of Christmas changes: [we are] immersed in a consumerism that corrodes its meaning. The consumerism of Christmas. It is true that you want to give presents, that's fine. That is one way, but that frenzy of shopping that draws the attention elsewhere, and that sobriety of Christmas is lost. Let us look at the crib — that awe before the crib. Sometimes there is no inner space for astonishment, but only for organizing parties, for having parties.

And the Nativity scene was created to bring us back to what matters: to God who comes to dwell among us. This is why it is important to look at the Nativity scene, because it helps us understand what matters and also the social relationships of Jesus at that time, the family, Joseph and Mary, and loved ones, the shepherds. People before things. And we often put things ahead of people. This doesn't work.

In addition to sobriety, which makes us see, the Nativity scene of Greccio also speaks of joy because joy is different from having fun. But having fun is not a bad thing if it is done on the right path. It is not a bad thing, it is a human thing. But joy is deeper still. More human. And sometimes there is a temptation to have fun without joy; to have fun by making noise, but there is no joy. It is a bit like the figure of the clown, who laughs and laughs and makes people laugh, but the heart is sad. Joy is the root of good Christmas fun.

But where did this Christmas joy come from? Certainly not from having brought home presents or having experienced lavish celebrations. No, it was the joy that overflows from the heart when one tangibly touches the nearness of Jesus, the tenderness of God, who does not leave us alone, but consoles us. Closeness, tenderness, and compassion are the three attitudes of God. And looking at the Nativity scene, praying before the Nativity scene, we can experience these things of the Lord that help us in every day life.

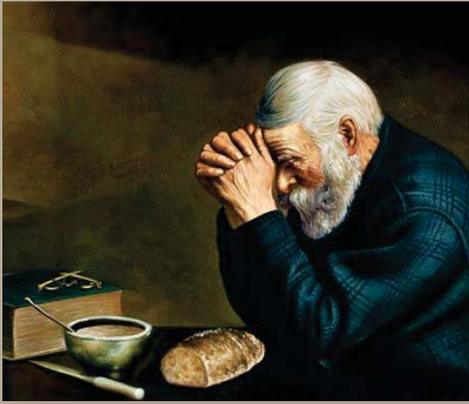
Dear brothers and sisters, the Nativity scene is like a small well from which to draw the nearness of God, the source of hope and joy. The Nativity scene is like a living Gospel, a domestic Gospel. Like the well in the Bible, it is the place of encounter where we bring to Jesus the expectations and worries of life, just as the shepherds of Bethlehem and the people of Greccio did. Bringing to Jesus the expectations and the worries of life.

If, before the Nativity scene, we entrust to Jesus all we hold dear, we too will experience “great joy” (Mt 2:10), a joy that comes precisely from contemplation, from the spirit of amazement with which I go to contemplate these mysteries.

Let us go before the Nativity scene. Everyone, look, and allow your heart to feel something within.

Leo P.P. XIV





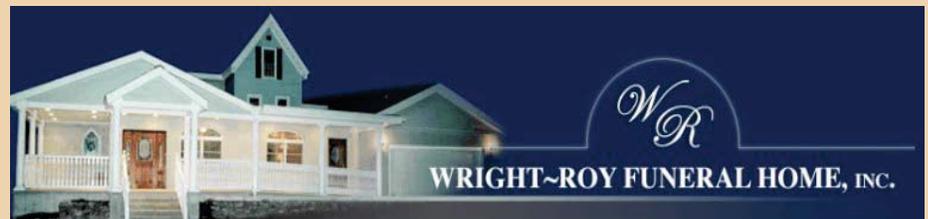
PRAY WITH US!

Pray for all who are sick, and especially for: Albert Thebeau, Richard L., Bob Allan, Harold LeBlanc, Emily, John Richard, Barbara Casey, Al Lamoureux, Ann Murphy, Helen St. Germaine, Janet Baron, Rosemarie (Albert) Orr, Mark Rohoc, Lisa Stacy, Steve Augat and Lindsey Booth.

Join us in praying for those who have died recently. Pray for their families, as well, that they may be consoled by the promises of Christ.

If you know someone who needs prayers, call the rectory or email office@stceciliachurch.net and we will add them to our prayer list for the next several weeks.

**DUE TO EARLY
BULLETIN
SUBMISSION, THE
PARISH
COLLECTIONS
AMOUNT WILL BE
PUBLISHED IN THE
NEXT BULLETIN.**



We are so grateful to our friends, Norman, Melissa and Cheryl at Wright-Roy Funeral Home for the 2026 calendars which are available at the entrances to the church.

Did you get yours yet?

St. Cecilia's January Calendar Raffle, thirty-one days of prizes ranging from \$100 to \$1,000 in cash and or gift cards totaling \$5,000! Gift one to someone, or buy one for yourself. Each calendar is \$15 or three for \$40. Calendars can be purchased at the parish office Monday through Friday from 10am to 3pm, at Friday Night Bingo or give us a call at 978-537-6541 for more information. Drawings will be held on Wednesdays, first drawing January 7th and will be streamed on our parish website and Facebook page.

Good Luck to All!

A Year-End Gift from the Heart

As we enter these final weeks of the year, our hearts naturally turn toward giving—grateful for the greatest gift of all, the birth of Christ at Christmas. This is also a time when many families review their charitable contributions while preparing for the coming year’s taxes. We invite you to prayerfully consider making a year-end gift to our beloved Saint Cecilia Parish. Your generosity strengthens our ministries, supports our parish family, and helps us continue proclaiming the Gospel with joy. Thank you for all the ways you share your blessings with our community.

Perhaps a donation to help keep us warm this winter

Heating all three parish buildings during December alone costs more than **\$23,000**. Your gift can make a real difference in meeting this essential need.

Perhaps a donation to assist with insurance and diocesan obligations

Each month, Saint Cecilia Parish pays **\$14,443** in Diocesan Insurance and Cathedraticum. Your support helps us meet these required responsibilities faithfully and on time.

Perhaps a donation toward our roofs, gutters, and tower

Over the past four years, we have invested more than **\$1 million** to water-proof our beloved church. After four years of work, the roofs and gutters are nearly complete, but the tower still awaits restoration. Your generosity will help us finish this crucial work.

**In all things, we trust in your prayers—
the greatest gift of all!**

✂ — — — — — **YEAR-END APPEAL RESPONSE FORM** — — — — — ✂

Dear Monsignor Moroney,

Please find enclosed my year-end donation to Saint Cecilia Parish. Please apply this donation to the following area(s):
(✓ Please check all that apply.)

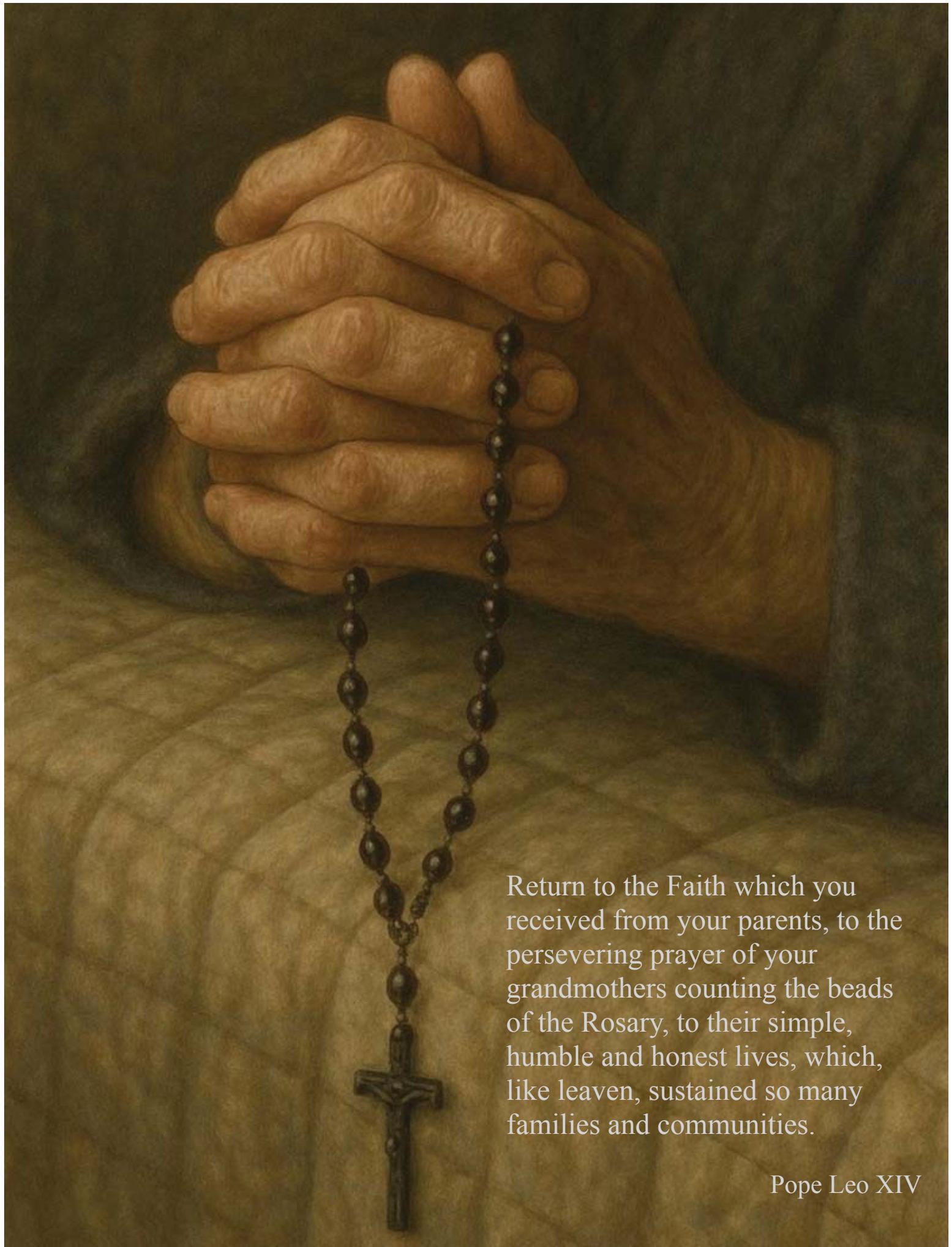
- Heating Costs**
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Thank you for your prayers and generosity!





Return to the Faith which you received from your parents, to the persevering prayer of your grandmothers counting the beads of the Rosary, to their simple, humble and honest lives, which, like leaven, sustained so many families and communities.

Pope Leo XIV



THIS WEEK AT SAINT CECILIA



Saturday December 27 Vigil *Breaking Bread, page 53*

3:00pm Confessions (Church)
4:00pm Mass for All Souls in Purgatory (Church)

Sunday December 28 The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph *Breaking Bread, page 53*

7:00am Mass for Leo Bolduc (9th anniv.), by his nephew, Larry Gladding (Church)
 9:30-11:00am OCIA Group Meeting (Rectory)
9:45am Mass for Danny Gould (32nd anniv.), by Millie and Ryan (Church)
 No Religious Education Classes Today
11:15am Mass for Beverly Sherwin Farias (4th anniv.), by Anne Marie and Jean Noel Bernard (Church)
 6:00-8:00pm Sunday Night Card Players (Parish Center)

Monday December 29 Christmas Octave

9:00am Mass for Paul Albert (8th anniv.) and Janice Hanson (6th anniv.), by the family (Chapel)
 3:00pm Rosary and Divine Mercy Novena (Chapel)
 No Religious Education Classes Today

Tuesday December 30 Christmas Octave

9:00am Mass for Jacqueline Moen, by Jeanne Conte and Karen Moore (Chapel)
 3:00pm Rosary and Divine Mercy Novena (Chapel)

Wednesday December 31 Vigil of Mary, Mother of God *Breaking Bread, page 55*

9:00am Mass for Alexander and Sophranie Tellier, by the family (Chapel)
 Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament follows Mass - Benediction at Noon (Chapel)
 3:00pm Rosary and Divine Mercy Novena (Chapel)
 3:00pm Confessions (Church)
4:00pm Mass for Theresa St. Pierre, by her family (Church)
 NO 6:00pm Mass, 6:30pm Confessions or 7:00pm Rosary Today

Thursday January 1 Mary Mother of God *Breaking Bread, page 55*

7:00am Mass for Kevin Leclerc, by his mother, Lorraine and brother, Richard (Church)
 NO Confessions or Rosary Today
9:45am Mass for Marcia Guay, by her parents (Church)
11:15am Mass for Richard H.J. Brow, by last will (Church)
 7:00-9:00pm Haitian Prayer Group (Chapel)

Friday January 2 Saints Basil and Gregory Nazianzen

9:00am Mass for Georgette Beliveau, by Florian (Chapel)
 Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament follows Mass - Benediction at Noon (Chapel)
 3:00pm Rosary and Divine Mercy Novena (Chapel)
 6:30pm BINGO Doors Open at 4:00pm; Games start at 6:30pm (Parish Center)

Saturday January 3 The Most Holy Name of Jesus

9:00am Mass for Paul St. Pierre, by the family (Chapel)
 9:30am Confessions (Church)

Saturday January 3 Vigil

Breaking Bread, page 57

3:00pm Confessions (Church)
4:00pm Mass for Rheel J. Boudreau (1st anniv.), by Jeannette and Jean (Church)

Sunday January 4 The Epiphany of the Lord

Breaking Bread, page 57

7:00am Mass for Lawrence and Barbara Gallant, by Richard and Cheryl Gallant (Church)
 9:30-11:00am OCIA Group Meeting (Rectory)
9:45am Mass for Norman Vautour, by Yvonne Richard (Church)
 9:45-11:00am Religious Education for Catechesis of the Good Shepherd through Grade 6 (Parish Center)
11:15am Mass for Michael Albert (1st anniv.), by his family (Church)
 6:00-8:00pm Sunday Night Card Players (Parish Center)





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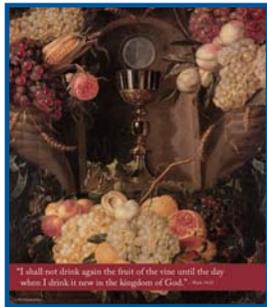
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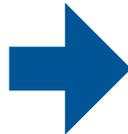
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