

# Saint Cecilia Parish

90 Church Street  
Rockaway, New Jersey 07866

Parish Office: 973-627-0313

Website: [www.st-cecilia.org](http://www.st-cecilia.org)

Fax: 973-627-4811

To Contact: Fr. Zig: Ext. 12 or [speplowski@optonline.net](mailto:speplowski@optonline.net)

Fr. Cerilo: Ext 14 or [javinece@shu.edu](mailto:javinece@shu.edu) – Fr. Matt: Ext 15 or [frmateuszdarlak@gmail.com](mailto:frmateuszdarlak@gmail.com)

School: 973-627-6003

CCD Office: 973-627-0313 Ext. 17

**Rev. Sigmund Peplowski**  
PASTOR

**Rev. Cerilo Javinec**  
PAROCHIAL VICAR

**Rev. Mateusz Darlak**  
PAROCHIAL VICAR

**Deacon Paul Willson**

**Seminarian Angel Torres**

**Mrs. Janet Maulbeck**  
BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR  
and YOUTH PROTECTION/  
SAFE ENVIRONMENT  
COORDINATOR

**Mr. James Clancy**  
DIRECTOR OF FAITH FORMATION

**Mrs. Ann Mitchell**  
PRINCIPAL

**Mrs. Diane Boykow**  
CEMETERY ADMINISTRATOR

**Mr. Charles Linnell**  
MUSIC DIRECTOR



## CERTIFICATE OF ELIGIBILITY

All Catholic Churches in the United States require from Catholics serving as a Godparent for Baptism or a sponsor for Confirmation a certificate of eligibility. This document certifies that the Godparent/sponsor is a registered member of the parish, attends Holy Mass, approaches the sacraments regularly and contributes to the support of the Church via the Sunday offering envelope program or "Parish Pay". It is the responsibility of the individual to meet these requirements as listed in the Code of Canon Law, #874.

## MASSES

### Weekends

Saturday: 4:30 pm, 7:00 pm  
Sunday: 8:00 am, 9:15 am  
10:45 am and 12:15 pm  
5:00 pm (Vietnamese)

### Holydays

Vigil 4:30 pm  
6:30 am, 8:00 am & 7:00 pm

### Weekday Schedule:

Monday - Friday  
6:30 am & 8:00 am

### Saturday

8:00 am followed by Novena

### Confessions

Saturdays 3:30 pm to 4:00 pm  
and 6:30 pm  
Any time by appointment

**Susan Brennan**  
TRUSTEE

**James Gallagher**  
TRUSTEE

## SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

A Pre-Baptismal Class is held the third Monday of each month at 7:00 pm in the parish office. To register for the class, please call 973-627-0313. Both parents are encouraged to attend the class before the birth of the baby. The Sacrament of Baptism is administered weekly at the 12:15 pm Mass and a Baptismal Ceremony at 1:30 pm. Families are required to be active, contributing parishioners of St. Cecilia's Parish for 2 months prior to the child's baptism date.

## SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY

Arrangements are to be made at least ONE YEAR in advance. The date should not be set until the priest has been consulted.

## SACRAMENT OF THE SICK

Urgent calls will be attended to at any time of the day or night. If there is anyone at home or in the hospital who cannot get to Mass and the Sacraments because of illness or old age, please inform one of the priests or call the Parish Office.

## PARISH PRAYER LIFE

### NOVENA: OUR LADY OF THE MIRACULOUS MEDAL AND OUR LADY OF FATIMA

Saturday morning after the 8:00 am Mass

**BIBLE STUDY:** Tuesday @ 9:30 am, Monday Night Bible Study @ 7:30 pm, Mommy Bible Study @ 9:30 am on Thursdays

### CHARISMATIC PRAYER GROUP

Tuesday evenings at 7:45 pm (Hayes Hall)

**PADRE PIO PRAYER GROUP:** 3rd Wed. @ 7:00 pm (PO)

**HOLY HOUR:** Monday @ 7:00 pm

**ADULT FAITH FORMATION RCIA:** Sunday @ 9:00 am for children & parents, 11:45 am for adults (PO)

**ROSARY PRAYER GROUP:** Monday through Sat. @ 7:30 am

## Parish Office Hours

Monday thru Thursday: 8:30 am to 4:30 pm  
Friday: 8:30 am to 2:30 pm  
Closed for lunch: 12:00 to 1:00



## Mass Intentions

### Monday, March 4, Saint Casimir

6:30 am — Special Intention

8:00 am — Thomas Boykow, Birthday Remembrance, req. by the Boykow Family

### Tuesday, March 5, Weekday

6:30 am — Bev Wells req. by the Howmet Family

8:00 am — Paul Leuthard req. by Pat Libak

### Wednesday, March 6, Ash Wednesday

6:30 am — St. Cecilia Parishioners

8:00 am — St. Cecilia Parishioners

4:30 pm — Litany of the Word

7:00 pm — St. Cecilia Parishioners

### Thursday, March 7, Saints Perpetua and Felicity, Martyrs

6:30 am — Special Intention for the Sick

8:00 am — Mary Jozwiak

### Friday, March 8, Saint John of God, Religious

6:30 am — Guy Moore req. by Ellen & Steve Kairys

8:00 am — Theodore, Christine & Rose Kobylar

### Saturday, March 9, Saint Frances of Rome, Religious

8:00 am — Helen Struble req. by Ag and Family

### Sunday, March 10, First Sunday of Lent

4:30 pm — Ralph Bozza req. by Blanche Gray & Patrice Hennen

Tom Boylan req. by Carol & Gary McGotty

7:00 pm — Deceased members of the Zygmunt Family

Leila Marie BenFredj req. by Jane Payne

8:00 am — Special Intention

9:15 am — Mary Jozwiak

Mildred Cregge, 40th Anniversary, req. by Pat Libak

10:45 am — Joseph Stassi req. by the Marchese Family

Doug Libretti req. by Pat & Kathy Deo

12:15 pm — Joseph Sala req. by Eleanor Sala & Family

Georgette Vizzini req. by Maureen & John Murname

Please  
**P R A Y**  
for the sick of our parish and  
those that care for them

Ethan Chandra, Dean Wayne Campbell, Doris Cusick, Carol Centonze, Jane Goricca, Sam Sessa, Hank Brown, Carol Ferrante, Jim Golden, Karen Niles, Noel Wadleigh, Joanna Sacco, David Cicchine, Teresa D'Atria, Derek Bascharow, Debbie Malc, Grace McDermott, Joe Horvath, Jr., Elvira Bugaoan, Pat Heady, Owen Peter Byrne, Tia Maddaloni, Mason Walker Steussing, Susan Mejia, Derek Bascharow, Isabel Rattay, Donna Cooke, Tom Hull, Kathleen Fazio, Kristin Wich, Kyle Johnson, Kate Darlington, Jake Michael Miraldi, Cheryl Anne Bornemann, Sean Nolan, Maryann Hughes, Peggy Eileen Miars, Ray Kennedy, Richard Corcoran, Madison Rose Leslie, Demetrius Barbee, Lucille Bardi, Frances Finn, Dorothy Murray, Virginia Cousins, Madlyn Long, Stephanie Lewis, Florence Clements, Kimberly Dugan, Gale Sessa, Marguerite Buggy, Mike Murray, Helene Turner, Michael Turner, Ruben Lorenzo, Michael Alvarez., Mina Simmons-Jones, Joe Maulbeck, Mary Merz, Dolores Faulkner, Marion & Philipp Cables, Patricia Smith Schulman, Vincent Fortunato, Victoria Santana, Joyce Turner, Tom Cumiskey, Dennis O'Brien, Steven Simmons, Ariel, James DiStaiso.

### ST. CECILIA CHURCH COLLECTION GOALS

Week Ending 02/24/19

Collection—Checks	\$ 2,739.00
Collection—Cash	\$ 8,006.50
WeShare Electronic Giving	\$ 3,070.09
<b>Total Weekly Collection</b>	<b>13,815.59</b>

Yearly Collection Goal (BUDGET)	\$ 839,000.00
Weekly Goal	\$ 15,196.08

<b>Weekly Collection Surplus (Deficit)</b>	<b>\$ (\$1,380.49)</b>
<b>Year To Date Surplus (Deficit)</b>	<b>\$ (17,786.57)</b>

### THE WORD OF GOD

24: Dt 26:4-10 Ps 91:1-2, 10-15

Rom 10:8-13 Lk 4:1-13



*The Sanctuary Candle burning  
on our altar this week is  
In loving memory of  
**Thomas Boykow***

**ASH WEDNESDAY** – The Beginning of the 40 day season of Lent is Ash Wednesday, March 6<sup>th</sup>. The celebration of the Holy Mass will be at 6:30 a.m.; 8:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Liturgy of the Word will take place at 4:30 p.m. Ashes will be administered at all the above times.



The people of St. Cecilia Parish are asked to pray for the following people serving our country in the armed services: **Sme3 Andrew Clifford, LCpl. Aleksandr Killeen, Joseph Giannetti US Navy, Lance Corporal Dennis Wuest, Capt. Kelley E. Robbins, Pvt USMC, Diego Usma, Major Glenn E. Martinez, Sgt. Brian Whalen, Capt. Anthony Odierno, Cpl. Kong V. Nguyen, Cpl. Jim Van Valen, LCPL Anthony Eresman, Sgt. Paul J. Willson, PFC Cano Janeth, Sgt. Bob Autrey, Col. William Paliwada, Sgt 1st Class (E7) Sam Colon, PFC Marylyn Rivera-Sachez, Cpl. Edward C. Thompson, Major Kevin M. Nash, Lt. Amy Cronin, Col. John L. Medeiros, Jr., Sgt. Daniel Healy, Marine Keith Leitner, Sgt. Spencer Lopez, PFC Taryn Kemp, Jeffrey Braunhausen, E7 Joseph Grimsey, Bill Maloney, Greg Bloete, Gian Carlo Bruzzese, Spc. Christopher Little, PFC Brittany Martindell, PO1 (E6) Matthew Fitzgerald, SA Justin C. White, Matthew & Daniel Rosica, Mark Leonard, Sr. Armn. Ashley Valetta, Sgt. John Wisnofsky, Cpl. T.J. Finn, Sgt. Kristopher Faber, Capt. Vincent Presto, Airman First Class William Kussler, Spc. Gregory Villaneuva and Cpl Casey W. Lyness. We ask God the Father of us all, through the intercession of St. Michael the Archangel, to protect all the men and women in our Armed Forces, to bless them in their efforts toward bringing peace and justice to our world. May they be brought back safely to those they love.**

580-St. Cecilia

## PARISH EVENTS

**SAINT JOSEPH NOVENA** – The novena in honor of Saint Joseph will begin on Monday, March 11<sup>th</sup>. The novena will take place at the conclusion of the 8 o'clock morning Mass each day. The Solemnity of Saint Joseph is Tuesday, March 19<sup>th</sup>. Following the 8 o'clock Mass on the feast day the traditional Saint Joseph Table will be blessed in Hayes Hall. All are welcome for coffee and "St. Joseph pastry" on that day.

**SAVE THE DATE**  
**The St. Monica Guild**  
**Is sponsoring a**  
**Corned Beef & Cabbage Dinner**  
**On Saturday, March 16th, 2019**  
**For more info: call Pat Zayac @ 973.625.4572**

**BAPTISM CLASS** – A meeting of all those wishing information and scheduling for a baptism will meet on Monday evening, March 18th in the Saint Cecilia Parish office at 7 o'clock in the evening. Father will be present to conduct the information session and answer questions regarding the celebration of the sacrament.

*Craft and Vendor Fair*  
 St. Cecilia Church Hall  
 Saturday, March 23, 2019  
 9:00 am - 2:00 pm  
[saintceciliarosarysociety@gmail.com](mailto:saintceciliarosarysociety@gmail.com)  
 973-886-8023

**RICE BOWLS** – Our Lenten alms project is the support of Catholic Relief Services, RICE BOWL. You are asked to participate in alms-giving by placing the rice bowl on your table at home throughout all of Lent. Each week you should place in the rice bowl the money that could have been used for snacks which you are abstaining from during Lent. The rice bowls filled with your alms should be brought to the church on Easter Sunday when our fasting is concluded. If a check is to represent your alms, the check should be made payable to St. Cecilia Church, with the memo: ALMS. Please be sure to read the information which is printed on the alms box as well as the information which is included in the rice bowl which speaks about the people who will feast as a result of your fast, people who are in need throughout the world. Prayer, fasting and alms-giving have been part of the Church's tradition since the time of the Apostles. Let this be part of your life too!

## Sacred Relics of the Saints, Treasures of the Church

St. Cecilia Parish presents a teaching and exposition of Sacred Relics on Thursday, March 7th. There will be a verbal presentation from 7:00 pm until 8:00 pm followed by private veneration from 8:00 pm until 10:00 pm. Father Carlos Martins of the Companions of the Cross will be here with a very special Vatican collection of over 150 relics, some as old as 2000 years. Among the treasures will be relics of St. Maria Goretti, St. Therese of Lisieux (the "Little Flower"), St. Francis of Assisi, St. Anthony of Padua, St. Thomas Aquinas, and St. Faustina Kowalska. In addition, there will also be present a portion of the veil of Our Lady, as well as one of the largest remaining pieces of the True Cross in the world. Those in attendance will be able to examine and venerate each relic. In the Church's history many miracles and healings have been worked in the presence of relics, and many have been healed through this ministry. Please do not miss this opportunity. You are encouraged to bring your articles of devotion (such as rosaries, holy cards, etc.) and pictures of ill friends/family members which you will be able to touch to the reliquaries as a means of intercession.

**PADRE PIO PRAYER GROUP** – The Saint Padre Pio Prayer Group will meet on Wednesday evening, March 20th, at 7 o'clock in the parish office for devotions and prayer meeting

## ST. CECILIA SENIOR CLUB NEWS AND EVENTS

*Please be advised that all the "Senior Events" are open to everyone 55 and over from St. Cecilia & Sacred Heart Parishes!*

### **Regular Meeting: Tuesday, March 5th & 19th**

*11:00 am set up; 12-1 social hour with coffee & cake  
 1-2pm meeting, bingo & cards afterward*

### **Sands Casino: March 12th – \$30.00 – Slot Play \$25**

*For more info: Lorraine @ 973.366.6871*

### **Hunterdon Hills Playhouse – Thursday, April 25th**

*Includes meal & show "Take Me Away"*

*For more info: Carol @ 973.537.5529*

### **SAVE THE DATE: September 3-8**

Motorcoach trip to beautiful Island of Coudres & Quebec City, Canada includes guided tours plus a visit to St. Ann DeBeaupre Shrine. All breakfasts & dinners included. For more info call Carol @ 973.537.5529.



**BEWARE:** Its come to our attention that some people have received “scam” emails from Fr. Zig or one of the priests. Please know these messages are fake that are requesting “favors”, “money” or “gift cards”. Should you have any questions, please call the parish office at 973-627-0313. Do not reply to these emails.

**The Feminine Genius Project:**

A prayer and discussion ministry for mothers. Discover your mission and the gift of your feminine genius and help others do the same! The Feminine Genius Project is an apostolate that works to help each mother become who God is calling her to be. We will meet every first and third Saturday morning (6:30—8:00 am) in the St. Cecilia parish office for grace & coffee. We hope that this gives each of us the spiritual recharge we need through prayer, group discussion, and time with Christ in the Blessed Sacrament in order to serve our families, our communities, and our Lord Jesus better. This group serves mothers with school-aged children. Babysitting is not provided. This time of prayer, reflection, and fellowship is reserved for mothers only.

Any questions, please reach out to Armi Clancy / Beth Mainardi (TheFeminineGeniusProject@gmail.com)



**ATTENTION MEN** – A men’s group called **FATHERS OF ST. JOSEPH** will be meeting every other Saturday morning at 5:30 a.m. in the St. Cecilia Office Building. The Fathers of St. Joseph gatherings are not so much meetings as they are mini retreats, whose aim is to communicate the spirituality of fatherhood in a manner that encourages and inspires fathers to embrace, engage and – by the power of the Holy Spirit – sanctify their vocation. **Our next meeting is March 9th.**

**ECUMENICAL LENTEN LUNCHESES** – The annual Lenten Lunches sponsored by the churches of Rockaway will commence on Friday, March 8th. The weekly event takes place at the First Presbyterian Church fellowship hall and begins promptly at 12:00 noon. The program consists of a light lunch (donation is expected) followed by a short prayer service conducted by a different clergyperson each week. You are invited to attend this ecumenical event which has been very successful over the years!

**Divine Mercy Sunday Pilgrimage**

National Shrine of Divine Mercy, Eden Hill, Stockbridge, MA

**When:** Sunday, April 28th, 2019

**Meeting Place:** Park & Ride, Parsippany  
(Corner Rt 46 E & Beverwick Road)

**Assembly Time:** 6:30 am

**Departure Time:** 700 am

**Return Time:** 8:30 pm

**Donation:** \$40.00

**Payable To:** Becky Smorra

48 Dogwood Trail, Randolph, NJ 07869

**For more information & reservations,** please call:

Becky Smorra 973-361-3891 or 862-432-0072

Email: rsmores@hotmail.com

Annie & Michael Biehl @ 973-657-7142

Email: abiehl@optonline.net

**Church Regulations Regarding Fast and Abstinence:**

Abstinence from meat (beast or fowl) is to be observed by all Catholics fourteen years old and older on Ash Wednesday and on all the Fridays of Lent. This obligation prohibits the eating of meat, but not eggs, milk products, or condiments of any kind, even though made from animal fat.

Fasting means limiting oneself to one full meal on a given fast day. Catholics who are eighteen years of age but not yet fifty-nine are obliged to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. On fast days, two additional smaller meals are permitted if necessary to maintain strength. However, the two smaller meals together may not equal one full meal. Moreover, eating solid foods between meals on fast days is not permitted.

**OLD PALMS**

With the beginning of the holy season of Lent old blessed palms may be brought to the church and placed in the basket located in the church vestibule. Blessed palms may be disposed of by burning or burying them.

**THE WAY OF THE CROSS**

***A FRANCISCAN MYSTERY PLAY***

On Friday, March 15<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 p.m., the Franciscan Mystery Players will present their moving version of “*The Way of the Cross*” at St. Clement R.C. Church, 154 Mt. Pleasant Avenue, Rockaway Township.

Written by Franciscan Father Francis Pompei, the Mystery Play is not a “play” in the common sense, but is in fact a prayerful experience that uses special lighting, a stirring soundtrack, pantomime actions and inspirational narration to portray the Stations of the Cross in a manner that invites each viewer to contemplate the meaning of the Passion, and how it relates to their life today. The group is comprised of 15 teens and 9 adult advisors from several parishes in the Paterson Diocese. Adults and teens are encouraged to attend this special Lenten experience. We suggest you arrive 15 minutes early. *A free will offering will be taken.*

# Calendar of Events

## Monday, March 4

7:00 pm – Holy Hour (Church)

7:30 pm – Monday Night Bible Study (Hayes Hall)

## Tuesday, March 5

9:30 am – Bible Study (Hayes Hall)

11:00 am – Seniors Meeting (Hayes Hall)

7:45 pm – Charismatic Prayer Group

## Wednesday, March 6

Ash Wednesday

## Thursday, March 7

9:30 am – Mommy Bible Study (Parish Office)

7:00 pm – Relics Display (Hayes Hall)

## Friday, March 8

7:00 pm – The Catacombs (Parish Office)

7:00 pm – The Stations (Church)

## Saturday, March 9

8:30 am – Men's Society Meeting (Hayes Hall)

10:00 AM – 2nd Grade First Penance (Church)

## Sunday, March 10

Daylight Savings Time Begins

9:00 am – RCIA (Parish Office)

9:15 am – Children's Liturgy (Hayes Hall)

11:45 am – RCIA (Parish Office)

**GIFT FROM THE HEART** – I am happy to tell you that nearly \$17,000 has been received to help finance the cost of repairing our church roof and cupola. I am praying to raise at least \$25,000 to cover the work to prevent further leaking near the altar. I was also told of the need to re-point the brickwork on the church chimney and to make it a deterrent to birds. I would also like to place a Cross on the top of the cupola to adorn the building. I am confident that we can reach this goal and so I appeal to all parishioners to make a donation, a gift from the heart, for our Cecilia! - Father Zig

**MASSES BEING OFFERED**—Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish on East Main Street is offering the following Masses each month: POLISH MASS on the second Sunday of every month at 11:30 a.m. and LATIN MASS IN THE EXTRAORDINARY FORM on the third Sunday of every month at 12 noon.

**Pilgrimage to Newport, R.I.:** Pilgrimage tour of La Salette Shrine in Attleboro, MA. On May 15th & 16th, 2019 sponsored by The St. Monica Guild. This trip includes Daily Mass—Bus from St. Cecilia Church—overnight accommodations—2 lunches—1 dinner—1 breakfast and admission to the sites. For more information, please call Pat Zayac at 973-625-4572.

## DIVINE MERCY ACADEMY NEWS

Divine Mercy Academy is now accepting applications for the 2019-2020 school year. Divine Mercy Academy is located at 87 Halsey Ave, Rockaway, 973.627.6003. We offer a safe, secure & compassionate environment with a high level of individualized attention; certified teachers; weekly liturgies & daily Religion class; academic curriculum with all core subjects; STEM; physical education; music; art; Spanish & library, with technology integrated throughout the curriculum. Before-care, after-care, and extracurricular activities are available.

Full Day & half day Pre-K3 & Pre-K4 programs starting at \$2510/year; Full day Kindergarten through 8th grade tuition rates as follows: 1 child: \$5200; 2 children \$8500; 3 children or more: \$10,300 per year.

Come see the difference an academically excellent Catholic education makes!

Divine Mercy Academy's 7th grade students recently reinforced their studies of the human body through a guided dissection of leopard frogs.



We are online: [www.st-cecilia.org](http://www.st-cecilia.org)

**Respect Life Corner**  
**Pregnant / Need help?**  
**HEARTBEAT INTERNATIONAL** <https://www.heartbeatinternational.org>  
[www.OptionLine.org](http://www.OptionLine.org) (24/7 365 helpline)  
 or 1-800-712-HELP  
 See the website for more information





My Dear Parishioners,

Today is the Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time as we celebrate the Lord's Day. The Scriptural texts for this day remind us that our "actions speak louder than words." So many times we speak without thinking; I know that I am very good at this. Wisdom is indeed present when we listen attentively, to others and our conscience, before we speak. In so doing we are prudent and thoughtful so as to respond in a manner which is truthful and respectful.

Today's Scriptures especially remind us how quickly we can tell others of their shortcomings or faults while being oblivious to our own. Such talk condemns us as arrogant and self righteous and places us in the company of the Pharisees the Lord Jesus rebuked so often in the Gospels. Speaking poorly of others and setting ourselves up as their judges testifies to our embracing sin, "...but an evil person out of a store of evil produces evil; for from the fullness of the heart the mouth speaks."

Our good words bring about encouragement, comfort, and solidarity for others. These words motivate us in the works of charity and mercy which build up the Kingdom of God in our midst. This work is the daily activity which we called upon to labor in knowing that in the end we will merit an eternal reward by sharing in the Resurrection victory of our Lord, God and Savior, Jesus Christ. In today's epistle reading we are reminded: *"Therefore, my beloved brothers and sisters be firm, steadfast, always fully devoted to the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain."*

Today is the final Sunday in Ordinary Time as we begin the holy season of Lent on Wednesday (Ordinary Time returns on Monday, June 10<sup>th</sup> with the Feast of Mary, Mother of the Church). Holy Lent is a solemn time for repentance and renewal. PRAYER, FASTING AND ALMS-GIVING are our disciplines during this time which prepares us for the Solemnity of Our Lord's Holy Resurrection. We will be hearing about these disciplines and our Lenten lifestyle on a regular basis so that we may be transformed to live a more genuine Christ like life.

On Wednesday I will make available to you the rice bowls which are used for alms and a Lenten devotional called "The Little Black Book" which is produced by the Diocese of Saginaw in Michigan. I will be reminding you of our weekly STATIONS OF THE CROSS service on Fridays during Lent as well as the invitation to attend daily Mass before going to work or school at 6:30 or 8 o'clock in the morning.

LENT means spring! This is the spring time for our soul – let us welcome it with joy and hope!

God bless you!

Father Zig

**STS. PERPETUA AND FELICITY,  
Martyrs – March 7**

STS. PERPETUA and FELICITY and the friends who died with them at Carthage are in a special class among the primitive martyrs since we possess authentic detailed records which give us a vivid picture of their experiences and personalities. There is a diary of St. Perpetua herself, a page by another martyr, and a concluding account by a first-hand witness who is thought to have been Tertullian.

St. Perpetua was a twenty-two-year-old noble lady of Carthage with a baby son and St. Felicity was a married slave who was pregnant. They were arrested under the anti-Christian edict of 202 along with three fellow Christians, Saturninus, Secundulus, and Revocatus. All had been converted by a layman, Satorus, who joined them voluntarily in the dungeon in which they were imprisoned for refusing to sacrifice to the gods.

St. Perpetua yielded her nursing child to her pagan father but remained firm in her Faith in spite of his pleas. St. Felicity gave birth to a child in prison and also remained steadfast in the Faith when the child was taken from her.

The martyrs were condemned to death and mauled by beasts in the amphitheater before finally being beheaded in the year 203. So shaken was the executioner by St. Perpetua's commanding aristocratic appearance that she herself had to guide his blade to her neck.

Their martyrdom became known throughout the Church – St. Augustine preached in their honor at least three times. St. Perpetua is mentioned in the Roman Canon of Eucharistic Prayer 1, but the Felicity mentioned with her is probably the Roman Martyr of 162.

PRAYER God, inspired by Your love, Sts. Perpetua and Felicity were able to disregard persecution and overcome the torment of death. Aided by their prayers, may we make constant progress in our love for You. Amen

Taken from, *Lives of the Saints*; Catholic Bookings Publishing Company, 1999, New Jersey

580-St. Cecilia

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