

Saint Cecilia Parish

90 Church Street
Rockaway, New Jersey 07866

Parish Office: 973-627-0313

Website: st-cecilia.org — Office: stcec@optonline.net

Fax: 973-627-4811

To Contact: Fr. Zig: Ext. 12 or speplowski@optonline.net

Fr. Matt: Ext 15 or frmateuszdarlak@gmail.com

School: 973-627-6003

CCD Office: 973-627-0313 Ext. 17

Rev. Sigmund Peplowski
PASTOR

Rev. Mateusz Darlak
PAROCHIAL VICAR

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

Mr. James Clancy
DIRECTOR OF FAITH FORMATION

Mrs. Jaime Ann Patel
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 "WeShare". It is the responsibility of the individual to meet these requirements as listed in the Code of Canon Law, #874.

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Arrangements for the Sacrament of Baptism can be made by calling Fr. Matt at extension 15.

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 @ 973-627-0313.

EMERGENCY PHONE:
862-251-3914

MASSES

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

Saturday @ 3:30—4:00 pm &

6:15-6:45 pm (when Mass is

celebrated in the church) &

Monday during Holy Hour

7:00—8:00 pm

Ms. Susan Brennan
TRUSTEE

Mr. James Gallagher
TRUSTEE

PARISH PRAYER LIFE

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

Saturday morning after the 8:00 am Mass

HOLY HOUR : Monday @ 7:00 pm

RCIA—RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION— FOR ADULTS:

Please contact Sr. Diane @ 973-627-0313 ext: 14

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

FEMININE GENIUS PROJECT: 1st & 3rd Saturday of the month at 8:00 pm in the parish office.

ST. JOSEPH MEN'S GROUP: 2nd & 4th Saturday of the month at 6:00 am in the parish office.

PADRE PIO PRAYER GROUP: 1st Wednesday of the month; 10:00 am in the church

ST. MONICA NOVENA: Last Saturday after 8:00 am Mass.

Parish Office Hours

Monday thru Thursday: 8:30 am to 4:00 pm

Friday: 8:30 am to 2:00 pm

Closed for lunch: 12:00 to 1:00

Monday, December 4, Saint John Damascene, Priest and Doctor of the Church

6:30 am – Carmen Iris Franqui req. by Lillian & Ismael Franqui

8:00 am – Gary Shaw req. by Barbara & Ed Higdon

Tuesday, December 5, Advent Weekday

6:30 am – Debbie Collins Sharp

8:00 am – Michael Burak req. by Barbara Quinby

Wednesday, December 6, Saint Nicholas, Bishop

6:30 am – For the sick listed in our bulletin and their caregivers

8:00 am – Dennis McCarthy req. by his sister, Noreen

Thursday, December 7, Saint Ambrose, Bishop and Doctor of the Church

6:30 am – V. Rev. Stanley Skrzypek req. by Fr. Zig

8:00 am – Mary Reynolds

4:30 pm – For the parishioners of our church

Friday, December 8, The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

6:30 am – Special Intention for the Kling Family

8:00 am – Laura Buro req. by her parents, Charles & MaryLou McGrath

7:00 pm – For the parishioners of our church

Saturday, December 9, Saint Juan Diego Cuauhtlatotzin

8:00 am – Special Intention for Renalyn Tejano req. by Amy Sebastian

Sunday, December 10, Second Sunday of Advent

4:30 pm – Jack Zayac req. by the Maulbeck Family

Steven J. Parillo req. by his mom, Carol

7:00 pm – Alice & Walter Lech req. by Dianna & John Sullivan

8:00 am – Dario Viera req. by Lillian & Ismael Franqui

9:15 am – Maureen Sawczyn req. by Cullen Family

Rosemary & Martin Matis req. by Rosemary Matis

10:45 am – Mario Zambrano req. by Family

Joseph Francesco Stango req. by DaSilva Family

12:15 pm – Joshua George Egan req. by HIS Home-Base Community

Bill R. Whelan req. by Family

PRAY FOR THE SICK AND THEIR CAREGIVERS

Ethan Chandra, Dean Wayne Campbell, Doris Cusick, Jane Gorica, Sam Sessa, Karen Niles, Noel Wadleigh, David Cicchine, Teresa D'Atria, Derek Bascharow, Debbie Malc, Grace McDermott, Joe Horvath, Jr., Elvira Bugaoan, Owen Peter Byrne, Tia Maddaloni, Mason Walker Steussing, Susan Mejia, Derek Bascharow, Jim Rattay, 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, Frances Finn, Dorothy Murray, Kimberly Dugan, Gale Sessa, Mike Murray, Helene Turner, Michael Turner, Ruben Lorenzo, Michael Alvarez, Mina Simmons-Jones, Joe Maulbeck, Mary Merz, Patricia Smith Schulman, Vincent Fortunato, Joyce Turner, Tom Cumiskey, Dennis O'Brien, Steven Simmons, Ariel, James DiStaiso, Marty Mackin, Brian Bosworth, Dennis Dilger, Robyne LaGrotta, Christopher Darlak, Frieda Solow, Claudia Fontanella, Claire Wasacz, Emilio Viola, James Deegan, Martha Salvesen, Ramiro Hinojosa, Jimmy Buckley, Emily Gatzke, Clare Desmond, Craig Huffman, George Stitik, Stephen Goordman, Cecilia Donofrio, Deidra Zink, Ray Wiest, Anthony Pane, Victoria Zuber, Keith Newman, Francis Sanchez, Raymond Fullam, Franco Maida, John Sandelli, Alan Zenkert, Fran Gatzke, Bob Nielsen, Gert Taylor, Walter Zelinski, Landon Wierks, Clo Callahan, Michael McClain, David Saggioli, Michael Hafke, Tyler Bascharow, Kevin R. Bruno, II, Larry Gatzke, Jeremiah O'Brien, Lanie Bruno, Jill Breslin, Nick Auriemma, Joan Apgar, Richard Sala.

ST. CECILIA CHURCH COLLECTION GOALS**Week Ending : November 19, 2023**

Collection—Checks & Cash	\$ 8,752.00
WeShare Electronic Giving	\$ 5,751.50
<u>Total Weekly Collection</u>	\$ 14,503.50

Yearly Collection Goal (BUDGET)	\$ 785,000.00
Weekly Goal	\$ 14,038.46

Weekly Collection Surplus (Deficit)	\$ 465.04
Year To Date Surplus (Deficit)	\$ (10,034.30)

ST. CECILIA CHURCH COLLECTION GOALS**Week Ending : November 26, 2023**

Collection—Checks & Cash	\$ 9,647.00
WeShare Electronic Giving	\$ 5,751.50
<u>Total Weekly Collection</u>	\$ 15,398.50

Yearly Collection Goal (BUDGET)	\$ 785,000.00
Weekly Goal	\$ 14,038.46

Weekly Collection Surplus (Deficit)	\$ 1,360.04
Year To Date Surplus (Deficit)	\$ (8,674.26)



*The Sanctuary Candle burning on our altar
this week is in loving memory of
Nicole Glazewski & Joseph Young
Requested by Barbara Quinby*

Our Condolences to the Family of:
Jeanne Gallagher and Larry Gatzke
Eternal Rest Grant to them Lord



The people of St. Cecilia Parish are asked to pray for the following people serving our country in the armed services: **SmE3 Andrew Clifford,**

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. 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

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION FOR ADULTS

We have begun this year's process of welcoming adults to RCIA (preparation for Baptism) and including adults seeking Confirmation and Eucharist in the Catholic Church. Our four inquiry sessions are now completed. But it's not too late to join us.

For this preliminary period our focus topics overviewed Catholic understanding of these basics for potential members before they make any commitments.

Living Baptism – (about Sacraments)

Knowing and Meeting Jesus – (about Scripture)

Looking at the Apostles Creed – (about Doctrine)

Living Catholic – Commandments & Beatitudes – (about Moral teachings)

New members can review this material at home under the direction of the RCIA Director and discern their readiness to join the preparation process.

The Catechumenate Community begins on December 3rd at the 10:45 am Mass followed by a meeting in the parish office until 12:30 pm. For more information or to register, leave a message for Sister Diane at the parish office - 973.627.0313 ext. 14 with your phone number and email.

HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION – The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary is Friday, December 8th. This is the patronal feast of the Church in the United States of America. We will celebrate the feast with a Vigil Mass on Thursday afternoon, December 7th at 4:30. On Friday, December 8th Holy Mass will be celebrated in the morning at 6:30 and 8 o'clock. An evening Mass will be celebrated at 7 o'clock. Please be aware that Church Street will allow for two-way traffic, unlike the weekend arrangement. It is recommended to park in our parish parking lots on Thursday and Friday.

RORATE MASS – The 6:30 a.m. weekly Mass during the season of Advent will be celebrated in honor of the Mother of God and Ever Virgin Mary. This Mass is known as the "Rorate Mass" which is a custom centuries old in the Western Church. Rorate is the Latin word for the term "to drip moisture" which comes from the Old Testament regarding the prediction of the coming of the Messiah.

**It's Safe, It's Simple & It's Convenient
Give online with WeShare**

Support St. Cecilia Parish today using your debit or credit card or checking or savings account: Visit www.st-cecilia.org and click Donate Online. Select the collection or event of your choice. Set up your donation or payment. That's it! **OR SCAN HERE:**



ECUMENICAL ADVENT SERVICE – Our parish will participate in the second annual ecumenical Advent service sponsored by the clergy of Rockaway on Friday, December 15th. The "progressive service" will begin at 6 p.m. at the United Methodist Church (near Park Lake) followed by a procession to the Presbyterian Church (our neighbor across the street) while singing Christmas carols. There will be a short service in the Presbyterian Church and then proceed, singing Christmas Carols, into Saint Cecilia Church. A short closing prayer will take place in our church followed by a reception in Hayes Hall and, weather permitting, an outdoor fire pit for fellowship. Let's join our neighbors as we pray for peace in our world.

BAMINELLI BLESSING – The blessing of the Baminelli (Baby Jesus from the crèche) will take place at all masses on Saturday and Sunday, December 16 and 17. This is an Italian custom in which the faithful bring to the church the Baby Jesus from their home Nativity display. This is a wonderful event in which the children can participate and learn about the faith through their parent's encouragement.

PARISH CHRISTMAS CONCERT – Our parish Christmas Concert will take place in the church on Sunday, December 17th at 7 o'clock in the evening. Join us for what will be a beautiful evening of choral and instrumental music.

ADVENT PENANCE SERVICE – 8 priests will be with us for our annual Advent penance service on Monday, December 18th beginning at 7 o'clock. This will be the final time to go to confession prior to Christmas so that our soul may be prepared to welcome our Savior.

SAINT CECILIA PRESENTS... - Our final presentation in the Fall series, Saint Cecilia Presents..., will take place on Thursday evening, December 14th in Hayes Hall beginning at 7 o'clock. Our own Sister Diane will speak on the topic, "The Sacraments at Christmas." Please join us!

ADVENT – On this first Sunday of Advent there are a few things which I draw your attention to and invite you to take along with you. **2024 LITURGICAL CALENDAR** is available for you to take home thanks to the generosity of the Kana-paux Funeral Home in Rockaway. **THE LITTLE BLUE BOOK** is a daily meditation aid for the Advent and Christmas season which you are invited to take (one per family, please) to support your spiritual life during this holy time. **OPLATEK** is also available for your Christmas Eve Vigil Supper and is located at the altar of Saint Joseph. Your donation is appreciated. – Father Zig

PREPARE YOURSELF FOR THE COMING OF OUR

Lord Jesus Christ!

Monday, December 4

7:00 pm—Holy Hour (Church)

7:30 pm—Bible Study (Hayes Hall)

Tuesday, December 5

9:30 am—Bible Study (Hayes Hall)

12:00 pm—Seniors Meeting (Hayes Hall)

7:45 pm—Light of Christ Prayer Group (HH)

Wednesday, December 6

10:00 am—Padre Pio Prayer Meeting (Church)

2:15 pm—DMA Lector's Club (Church)

Thursday, December 7**Friday, December 8**

The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary
DMA and Parish Office closed

Saturday, December 9

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

5:00 pm—Fish & Chips Dinner (Hayes Hall)

Sunday, December 10

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

10:45 am—RCIA (Church & Parish Office)

10:30 am—CCD Class (DMA)

WINTER POLICY - In the event of inclement weather and Divine Mercy Academy is closed, the parish office will be closed and the church will be open ONLY for the liturgical service scheduled. Also, all evening events will be cancelled.

ADVENT TREE – Our annual ADVENT TREE PROJECT is an opportunity for us to provide a gift for needy individuals and families who come to Catholic Charities seeking our services during difficult times. You are invited to take a tag from the tree and purchase the designated item. Please return the gift (WITH TAG ATTACHED) to the altar of Saint Joseph no later than Sunday, December 17th. May God bless you for the generosity you show to those in need!

BABY BASSINET – Our annual BABY BASSINET PROJECT is another opportunity to show generosity in this season of giving. BIRTH HAVEN is a residence in Newton which provides care for pregnant girls and young women providing transitional living and resources to help young mothers in desperate situations. Although their facility has experienced a fire, none the less the organization is still providing help to moms in need. They have asked for the donation of gift cards only, from the following: Amazon, Home Goods, ShopRite and Marshall's. Your donation may be placed in the bassinet located at the altar of the Blessed Virgin Mary prior to Sunday, December 17th.

MOMMY'S ADVENT BIBLE STUDY – Join mothers for a 3 week series of preparation for Advent-Christmas on Thursday mornings from 9:30 to 11 o'clock at Sacred Heart of Jesus Rectory Basement beginning December 7th. Please contact Gail Egan at: gailandjohn616@gmail.com for additional information and a digital copy of the prayer workbook.

Divine Mercy Academy News**Divine Mercy Academy's Grandfriends in Faith Program**

We are delighted to announce the revival of our Grandfriends in Faith Program. Ms. Roberti and her fourth grade students would like to extend a warm invitation to senior parishioners to join this wonderful intergenerational program. The goal of this program is to promote love, unity, and warm fellowship between youth and senior adults. The fourth grade class and their Grandfriends will meet throughout the school year in DMA's all purpose room to form a lasting friendship, join creative forces in a craft or activity, and grow in faith. Of course the meeting is never complete without delicious treats provided by the fourth grade parents. Please note that all Grandfriends will be required to complete the Diocesan "Protecting God's Children" process prior to participation. If you are interested in joining Grandfriends in Faith, please contact Mrs. Patel at

jpatel@dmrockaway.org.

FOOD PANTRY DONATIONS – Donations of food are gratefully accepted to help supply the two food pantries being assisted by our parish, the Rockaway Food Closet and Hope House (Catholic Charities in Dover). Your donations may be brought to the designated area in the stairwell of the church (side closest to the parish office) or left in the church vestibule. May God bless you for the generosity you show to the needy!

CONGRATULATIONS – Our best wishes to Sister Marie Pauline Demek, SCC who was installed as the Seventh President of Assumption College for Sisters on November 18th. Sister lives in our parish convent along with Sister Diane, Sister Marlene and Sister Chiara Marie.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY SACRED HEART – Our neighboring parish of Sacred Heart of Jesus located on East Main Street is commemorating its 100th anniversary today with a Pontifical Mass celebrated by His Excellency, Bishop Kevin Sweeney. Over the years Sacred Heart of Jesus and Saint Cecilia parishes have grown close with shared parish societies and other opportunities of Christian witness in Rockaway. We send our congratulations and prayer-filled best wishes to our brothers and sisters at Sacred Heart of Jesus and in particular to their pastor, Father Pawel Bala.

BEWARE OF SCAMS – Be on the alert of scams which say they are from me. **THEY ARE NOT!!!** Please call me at the office (973.627.0313x12) if you have **doubt** about a text, email, etc, which is supposedly from me asking for money, gift cards, favors, etc. **PLEASE DO NOT BE FOOLED!!!** Fr. Zig

FISH AND CHIPS DINNER – The Men's Society will sponsor their annual fish and chips dinner on Saturday, December 9th in Hayes Hall following the 4:30 p.m. Mass. Dinners are served or can be taken out. Tickets are on Sale following Mass. Proceeds from the dinner will benefit the Saint Faustina Scholarship Fund for Divine Mercy Academy. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Christmas Open House

The Sisters of Christian Charity welcome you to a Christmas Open House at Villa Pauline December 10, 1 – 5 p.m. Come and see Christmas splendor in a 19th century mansion. Live music and refreshments. Free will offering. 350 Bernardsville Road, Mendham.

2023 SIMBANG GABI - The 1st night of the traditional novena of Filipino Masses before Christmas will be celebrated at our church, Sacred Heart of Jesus, on Friday, December 15, at 7:00 in the evening. Rev Fr. Emerson Francisco will be the principal celebrant. Fellowship and Filipino refreshments immediately follow Mass.

The PASKO: Misang Pinoy (Filipino Christmas Mass) on December 25 will be celebrated by Rev. Fr. Cerilo Javinez in our church at 12:00 noon; it is a Holy Day of Obligation.

This traditional Filipino mass is sponsored by the Diocesan Commission for Catholic Ministries (DCCFM) of Paterson. For more information or if you wish to help, please get in touch with Elmer Maximo at (973)664-1949. Maraming salamat po.

Catholic Home Missions Appeal

Thank you for your generous support of last week's Catholic Home Missions Appeal. As a parish, we raised \$1,604.00 to strengthen the Church at home and spread the Gospel across the United States. If you missed the appeal, it's not too late to give! Just visit www.usccb.org/home-missions.

BUY YOUR TREE HERE – The Benedictine Monks of Saint Paul Abbey in Newton have thousands of Christmas Trees ready to choose n cut 7 days a week from now until December 21st from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The Abbey Gift Shop also has a variety of items which would make great Christmas gifts including: books, statues, jewelry and more. The Abbey is located at 289 Route 206, 1 mile south of Newton. The monks will appreciate your support!

TUESDAY NIGHT LECTURE SERIES

Assumption College for Sisters invites you to the Tuesday Night Lectures Series, *Honoring Seasons of Life*. Schedule and topics: **Dec. 12, *Season of Emmanuel*, "Our place at the Advent/Christmas table with the Holy Family"** with Mr. John Ward. Times: 7 - 8 pm, all lectures via LIVE STREAM. To register contact registrar@acs350.org indicating lectures you wish to attend and include a phone number. Free will offering. All are welcome!

"Fulfilled: Uncovering the Biblical Foundations of Catholicism"

Have you ever been unable to explain the "why" of Catholic beliefs? Have you ever wondered why the Old Testament sounds so different from the New Testament? In the Old Testament, God began building a plan and laying a foundation for the beautiful traditions of the Catholic Faith. That plan was fulfilled by Jesus in the New Testament. Fulfilled: Uncovering the Biblical Foundations of Catholicism is an apologetic approach to sharing the Catholic Faith using the Old Testament Tabernacle as a blueprint for God's plan. Fulfilled will reignite your love of Scripture and help you share and defend the Catholic Faith with the Word of God. Part One – Called into His Presence focuses on elements of the outer sanctuary of the Tabernacle and how they connect to the liturgical calendar, the priesthood, purgatory, baptism, and more.

Written and presented by Sonja Corbitt, this series will help you:

- Explain how Jesus fulfills the Old Testament.
- Share the Catholic Faith concisely.
- Acquire a thorough knowledge of the Tabernacle's design and its function as a blueprint for the Faith.
- Learn how to answer incomplete and non-Catholic interpretations of the Bible.
- Examine your own faith and grow deeper in your relationship with Christ!

This Study Set includes:

- The Full-Color Uncovering the Biblical Foundations of Catholicism Workbook – Provides session overviews, home reading assignments, engaging study questions, responses, and talk notes for the video presentations.
- The Uncovering the Biblical Foundations of Catholicism Book – Dives into the rich heritage of our Catholic faith.
- Online Access for One Year – Immediate access to the ten study videos and the online workbook.

This exciting series will begin on Monday January 8, 2023, at 7:30pm in Hayes Hall. Participants will meet for 7 weeks in a small group setting to view an engaging video presentation followed by a time of lively group discussion and fellowship. There will be a \$35.00 cost that covers the workbook, book, and online video access. Registration ends on December 20th. For more information or to register, contact Charles Malaniak cemalaniak@gmail.com.



My dear parishioners,

HAPPY NEW YEAR! Yes, it is the first day of the Year of Grace 2024 and the First Sunday of Advent. We begin the new year with our Lord telling us in the Gospel, “WAIT!” The theme of vigilance which characterized the conclusion the old year also begins this new year. Waiting in anticipation is something many are not too good at especially at this time of year as we draw near to the Christmas holiday. Our culture does not help us in waiting with Christmas decorations all about. When the Feast of the Savior’s Nativity does come most are already tired of the holiday and usher it out on December 26th.

Advent is our time to WAIT, to be patient, to prepare, to reflect on the mystery of our salvation in Christ who was born so that we might have eternal life. Waiting allows us to savor this time and not to rush but rather enjoy the stillness in anticipation of the festivity which is coming.

Yes, Christ is coming with the desire to be with us and to transform us into His holy people. He seeks to mold us into His disciples by allowing us to experience the challenges of this world so that we might bring about the characteristics of the Kingdom of God in the place in which we live.

As we wait for the Lord’s coming, at Christmas and at THE END, we pray that our evil inclinations may not overpower the good works we are called to perform in Jesus Name. Our aim is to remain open to the “spiritual gift” which God bestows, as we are reminded in today’s epistle reading. This help we received at baptism and sealed with at confirmation to provide us with strength and the ability to be docile in the Holy Spirit. Thus we are formed in the image of Christ as the ones who bring light and healing to a world filled with confusion and anxiety.

I encourage you to make your home a true domestic church by keeping Advent. WAIT to put up the Christmas decorations at home and talk to the children why we do this. Place an Advent Wreath in your home and gather around it for evening prayer. Participate in our parish “Advent Tree Project” which provides a gift at Christmas to a needy person. And pray for peace in the Holy Land, Ukraine and in other troubled places in the world so that this Christmas the Prince of Peace, Christ our Savior, may be born in the hearts of all people.

GLORY TO JESUS CHRIST-GLORY FOREVER!

Father Zig

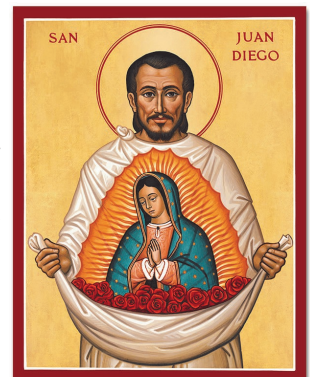
**Saint Juan Diego, Layman
December 9**

Little is known about the life of Juan Diego, to whom Our Lady of Guadalupe appeared on December 9, 1531. His given name was said to be “Cuauhtlatzin” (meaning “Talking Eagle” in his native language).

He was a member of the Chichimeca people, one of the more culturally advanced groups living in the Valley of Anahuac, as the area that is now Mexico City was once known. He was a leader of his own people and may have been involved in the area’s textile industry.

After the apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary, according to tradition, Juan Diego received the Bishop’s permission to live as a hermit in a small hut near the chapel that was built on Tepeyac. There he cared for the church and the first pilgrims who came to see the miraculous image and pray to the Mother of Jesus. His contemporaries were impressed with his holiness; parents used to bless their children with the wish “May God make you like Juan Diego.”

PRAYER Lord God, through Blessed Juan Diego You made known the love of Our Lady of Guadalupe toward Your people. By his intercession, grant that we who follow the counsel of Mary, our Mother, may strive continually to do Your will. Amen.



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