

Saint Cecilia Parish

90 Church Street
Rockaway, New Jersey 07866

Parish Office: 973-627-0313 Website: st-cecilia.org — Office: stcec@optonline.net
To Contact: Fr. Zig: Ext. 12 or speplowski@optonline.net
Fr. Matt: Ext 15 or frmateuszdarlak@gmail.com

Fax: 973-627-4811

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 11, Saint Damasus I, Pope

6:30 am — Departed Members of the Cables Family

8:00 am — Jeanne Gallagher req. by St. Cecilia Senior

Tuesday, December 12, Our Lady of Guadalupe

6:30 am — Vera & Elmer Sanborn

8:00 am — Special Intention for the Debari Family

Wednesday, December 13, Saint Lucy, Virgin and Martyr

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

8:00 am — Isabel & Alex Blazejewski req. by Dianna & John Sullivan

Thursday, December 14, Saint John of the Cross, Priest and Doctor of the Church

6:30 am — Lucy Onodugo req. by Judy & Patrick Umeukeje

8:00 am — Carolyn Killeen req. by Carol & Frank Desmond

Friday, December 15, Advent Weekday

6:30 am — Florence & Nels Salvesen, Sr.

8:00 am — Thomas Boykow req. by Family

Saturday, December 16, Advent Weekday

8:00 am — Renato Sebastian & Antonita DeJesus req. by Family

Sunday, December 17, Third Sunday of Advent

4:30 pm — Jack Zayac req. by Linda & Bob Zayac

Joseph Breslauer req. by Noreen

7:00 pm — Bob Wojtasiak req. by Barbara & Ed Higdon

8:00 am — Clifford Sachs req. by Naomi & Steve Drabik

9:15 am — Gloria Valenzuela req. by Jane Rocha
Deceased Members of the Sygmunt Family

10:45 am — John Toohey, Jr., req. by Carol Parillo

Mario Zambrano req. by Family

Gloria Benedict req. by Family

12:15 pm — Michael E. Wynn req. by his mom, Betty
Jess Seiple req. by Palma Family**ST. CECILIA CHURCH COLLECTION GOALS****Week Ending : December 3, 2023**

Collection—Checks & Cash	\$ 8,098.00
WeShare Electronic Giving	\$ 4,044.00
Total Weekly Collection	\$ 12,142.00

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

Weekly Collection Surplus (Deficit)	\$ (1,896.46)
Year To Date Surplus (Deficit)	\$ (10,570.73)



*The Sanctuary Candle burning on our altar
this week is in loving memory of
Laura Buro & Thomas Boykow
r/b: Charles & MaryLou McGrath*

Our Condolences to the Family of:
Anthony DeMarco and Evelyn Trapasso
Eternal Rest Grant to them Lord

OPLATEK — The bread which is used at the vigil supper on Christmas Eve is available at the altar of Saint Joseph. Your donation is appreciated.

CHRISTMAS BAKE SALE—The St. Monica Guild is sponsoring a Christmas Bake Sale on December 16th & 17th in Hayes Hall following all Masses. A wide variety of cakes, cookies and other treats will be available for your holiday gift giving and entertaining.

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, Il, Larry Gatzke, Jeremiah O'Brien, Lanie Bruno, Jill Breslin, Nick Auriemma, Joan Apgar, Richard Sala, Richard Cortese, Kathleen Sheridan.



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.

MONDAY NIGHTS – The Monday evening Bible study will resume on January 8th in Hayes Hall beginning at 7:30 p.m. Our course of study and conversation is entitled, "Fulfilled: Uncovering the Biblical Foundations of Catholicism." This 7 week video series is open to all adults. Workbook cost is \$35. For additional information please contact Chuck Malaniak at cmalaniak@gmail.com.

2024 CALENDAR – Many thanks to the Kanapaux Funeral Home on East Main Street in Rockaway for the donation of the 2024 Liturgical Calendars for our use. The calendars may be found on the table in the church vestibule.

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!

HEALING MASS – A healing Mass will be offered for those who have lost a child from miscarriage, stillbirth, abortion, illness, injury, war or violence, or any other means on Thursday, December 7th at 7:00 p.m. preceding the Eucharistic Holy Hour for life 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. All are welcome to Saint Vincent de Paul Church in Stirling, NJ. (Bebout Ave.)

We are online: www.st-cecilia.org

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.

Monday, December 11

7:00 pm—Holy Hour (Church)

7:30 pm—Bible Study (Hayes Hall)

Tuesday, December 12

9:30 am—Bible Study (Hayes Hall)

7:00 pm—Confirmation Class (DMA)

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

Wednesday, December 13**Thursday, December 14**

2:30 pm—DMA Cookie Exchange (Hayes Hall)

7:00 pm—St. Cecilia's Presents... (Hayes Hall)

Friday, December 15

5:00 pm—DMA Dance Recital (Gym)

6:00 pm—2nd Annual Ecumenical Progressive Advent Service (United Methodist Church—near Park Lake)

8:30 pm—Catacombs Youth Group (Church & Hayes Hall)

7:00 pm—DMA Dance Recital (Gym)

Saturday, December 16

Bake Sale after all the Masses

8:30 am—St. Monica's Guild Meeting (Hayes Hall)

8:00 pm—After Cana (Hayes Hall)

Sunday, December 17

Bake Sale after all the Masses

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

10:30 am—CCD Class (DMA)

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

7:00 pm—Christmas Concert (Church)

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.

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.

BISHOP SERRATELLI—Bishop Emeritus Arthur Serratelli is recuperating from cardiac surgery. Please keep the bishop in your prayers for a speedy recovery. Should you like to send him your prayers and best wishes you can do so by mailing your card to:

Bishop Arthur Serratelli
c/o: Holy Family Rectory
1 Lloyd Avenue
Florham Park, NJ 07932

2023 Diocesan Ministries Appeal "I Have Called You By Name" - As the end of 2023 approaches, we invite you to consider making a year-end charitable contribution to the Diocesan Ministries Appeal, which serves tens of thousands of people in need. God calls each of us by name to be a light in our communities where giving to the Appeal is a blessing to both the contributor and the recipient. Please make our Diocesan Ministries Appeal a priority in your year-end philanthropy. Gifts can be made by check, through gifts of securities, or credit card or online. May God bless you for your support! Please consider a donation to the 2023 Diocesan Ministries Appeal.

Respect Life Raffle 2023 Winners: Theresa Petrucci, Volvo, Ticket #179466, Bergen County; Lois Jarmicki, \$1,000 S/R gift card, Ticket #056476, Hunterdon County; Curt Muklevicz, \$750 S/R gift card, Ticket #180746, Ocean County; Theresa Celli, \$500 S/R gift card, Ticket #23535, Burlington County. Thank you for your support!

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.

Support a lifetime of service—Women and men religious have spent their lives serving others in prayer, ministry, education and care for those in need-usually for little or no pay. Today, their religious communities do not have enough retirement savings. As they age, they require essential care and medications. Please support them by giving to the Retirement Fund for Religious. Your donation makes a difference for nearly 25,000 senior men and women religious. Please give generously.

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!

THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD

Christmas Mass Schedule – 2023

Saturday, December 23rd:

Holy Masses for the Lord's Day at 4:30 & 7:00 pm
(4th Sunday of Advent)

Sunday, December 24th:

Holy Masses for the Lord's Day at 8:00 & 10:00 am
(4th Sunday of Advent)

Holy Masses for the Solemnity of the Lord's Nativity on
Sunday,

December 24th: 3:00, 4:30, 7:00 & 10:00 pm
(Christmas Carols at 9:30 pm)

Monday, December 25th:

Holy Masses for the Solemnity of the Lord's Nativity
At 8:00, 10:45 am & 12:15 pm (NO 9:15 am Mass on Christmas Day)

Vietnamese Holy Mass: 4:00 pm

Saturday, December 30th:

Holy Masses for the Lord's Day at 4:30 & 7:00 pm
(Feast of the Holy Family)

Sunday, December 31st:

Holy Masses for the Lord's Day
At 8:00, 9:15, 10:45 & 12:15 pm (Feast of the Holy Family)

Monday, January 1st, 2024

Holy Mass for the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God
At 8:00 & 10:00 am. *This year's Solemnity if NOT a Holy Day of Obligation

As determined by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

YEAR END GIVING – As the end of the year approaches many charitable organizations will send requests for a year end donation. The benefit of these donations to the giver is, in our case, the amount may be beneficial for income tax reporting and having the joy of knowing that your gift is a gift to the Lord. As you know, here at Saint Cecilia's we have a special Christmas Mass Offering which encourages you to make a special end of the year donation to our parish in honor of Our Lord's Nativity. For some individuals the best way to make a special donation may be to donate securities in lieu of cash. If you are in a position to contribute securities, please contact the parish office for further information to pass along to your broker to complete your donation. As always, our parish (your spiritual home) is most grateful for your contributions at this time and throughout the year! – *Father Zig*



My dear parishioners,

We gather on the Second Sunday of Advent to commemorate the Lord's Day with the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. The Gospel Passage from the Evangelist Mark introduces us to the person of John the Baptist who is the forerunner of the Messiah, Christ our Savior. The Baptist is portrayed as a man of the wilderness who lives an austere life and emerges to "make ready the way of the Lord" by inviting others to repentance and conversion. John's message is one of urgency and that failure to do as he proclaims will mean spiritual devastation and eternal damnation. The epistle reading for this Sunday taken from the Second Letter of Saint Peter confirms the message proclaimed by the Baptist John which echoes through time.

The message of John the Baptist resonates throughout this season of Advent calling all of us to repentance and conversion. What a wonderful time for us to set aside the unimportant "stuff" which clutters our lives and which weighs us down so that we can welcome the Lord in a beautiful way at Christmas. Firstly, let us approach the sacrament of penance this Advent. Going to confession cleanses the soul, ridding us of the sins which bring us into darkness. Encouraging our spouse, children and friends to come to the confessional will be like going to the banks of the Jordan. (Our Advent Penance service will take place on Monday, December 18th at 7 o'clock in the evening.) Praying the Rosary DAILY and/or attending DAILY Mass are some additional signs of a committed Christmas preparation.

I hope you will join with me in making this Advent truly one of anticipation of the Nativity Feast so that we may experience it with joy and as a foretaste of our meeting the Lord in the glory of eternity. Your anticipation is so vividly demonstrated in the generosity so many of you show by your participation in the annual ADVENT TREE PROJECT and the BABY BASSINET PROJECT which assist those in need. I am always astonished by your generosity which I know you perform in Jesus' Name and is a sign of your faith in Him.

The humility of Saint John the Baptist is present in the Gospel for today. He bows before the Messiah and serves Him with devotion. As we consider the virtue of humility let us recall the humility of the Messiah-Christ, who humbled Himself in leaving the glory of heaven to be born among us so that we might one day share in the glory of heaven.

COME LORD JESUS!

Father Zig

**ST. LUCY, Virgin and Martyr
December 13—Patroness of the Blind**

ST. LUCY, a native Syracuse in Sicily, was from her cradle educated in the Faith of Christ under the care of her widowed mother, Eutychia. At an early age she secretly made a vow of virginity. She accompanied her long-suffering mother to the tomb of St. Agatha, and there her mother was cured of her disease. St. Lucy then disclosed to her mother the vow she had taken, and her mother, in gratitude for her recovery, left her free to follow her pious inclinations.

The young nobleman who had sought her in marriage was so enraged that he accused Lucy of being a Christian. She was imprisoned, but God gave her grace to overcome the tortures she was made to endure. About the year 304, during the fierce war waged against the Christians under Diocletian, St. Lucy met her death by the sword.

PRAYER Lord, may the intercession of Your Virgin and Martyr St. Lucy help us so that, as we celebrate her heavenly birthday on earth, we may contemplate her triumph in heaven. Amen.



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

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