## 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.

#### **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

#### **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

#### 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, January 8, The Baptism of the Lord

6:30 am – Luis Felice req. by the Rivera Family

8:00 am – Jeanne Gallagher reg. by Roberta Vitcusky

#### Tuesday, January 9, Weekday

6:30 am – Bernard & Joan McDonnell req. by McDonnell Family

8:00 am - Thomas Doughty req. by McDonnell Family

#### Wednesday, January 10, Weekday

6:30 am – For the Service Men & Women listed in our bulletin

8:00 am – Edward Breslauer req. by his wife, Noreen

#### Thursday, January 11, Weekday

6:30 am – Jeanne Gallagher req. by McDonnell Famliy

8:00 am – Bob Berntsen req. by Joyce, Rob & Michael

#### Friday, January 12, Weekday

6:30 am – For the Holy Souls in Purgatory

8:00 am - Fredrick J. Slanovec req. by Rosemary Matis

Saturday, January 13, Saint Hilary, Bishop and Doctor of the

8:00 am — Louise Zayac req. by Pat Zayac

#### Sunday, January 14, Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

4:30 pm - Robert M. Smith req. by his wife, Phyllis Renato Sebastian, Birthday Remembrance, req. by

7:00 pm - For the deceased members of the Cables Family

8:00 am - Mary Reynolds

9:15 am - Emily "Terry" Triggiani req. by John & Lesley Graner

10:45 am – Ellen Flynn req. by Ed & Joanne Malone Mary Libretti req. by Pat Deo

12:15 pm – Deceased Members of the Felice and Rivera Families

#### ST. CECILIA CHURCH COLLECTION GOALS Week Ending: December 24, 2023 Collection—Checks & Cash 7,523.00

WeShare Electronic Giving 4,044.00 Total Weekly Collection 11,567.00

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

Weekly Collection Surplus (Deficit) \$ (2,471.46)Year To Date Surplus (Deficit) (12,842.88)

> St. Cecilia Church Collection Goals Week Ending: December 31, 2023 Christmas, 2023

Due to the early publication of the bulletin, the collections totals for the week will be shown next week. Thank you!



#### PRAY FOR THE SICK AND THEIR CAREGIVERS

Ethan Chandra, Dean Wayne Campbell, Doris Cusick, Jane Gorcica, 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 Cummiskey, 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, Jeremiah O'Brien, Lanie Bruno, Jill Breslin, 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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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.

PRAYER APP FOR \$1 – Our parish has purchased 500 partial subscriptions to the #1 Catholic prayer app, HAL-LOW! You can access a treasure of resources through this app: thousands of prayers, meditations, and music play lists for you to enjoy and enhance your personal prayer life. These partial subscriptions are a \$40 value and are available to you for only \$1. Please visit the parish website, st-cecilia.org to learn about how to claim your subscription and start praying today with Hallow!

YOUR SUGGESTIONS, PLEASE! – Our parish's 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee is seeking suggestions as to how we might celebrate our 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary which will run December 1, 2024 to November 22, 2025. You may go to the parish website, st-cecilia.org, to send in your suggestions OR by placing them in the 'suggestion box' located on the table in the church vestibule.

#### 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:



<u>TAKE DOWN</u> – We will gather on Wednesday evening at 6 o'clock to take down the Creche and Christmas trees in the church. Help will be needed for this project. The outdoor crèche will continue to be present until the Feast of the Presentation of Our Lord in the Temple, February 2<sup>nd</sup> which is the 40<sup>th</sup> and final day of the Christmas season.

<u>CHURCH ANNIVERSARY MEETING</u> – A meeting of the parish 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary committee will take place on Thursday, January 11<sup>th</sup> at 7 o'clock in the evening in Hayes Hall. All are welcome to join us in planning for our gala events!

NO HOLY HOUR/BIBLE STUDY – In commemoration of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day which is a national holiday, all Monday events will be cancelled on January 15th. The parish office is closed as well as our parochial school, Divine Mercy Academy.

MARDI GRAS – Our next parish "faith, food and fun event" will take place on Friday, February 9<sup>th</sup> in Hayes Hall beginning at 5:30 with supper followed by our program for both adults and children. This Pre-Lent gathering will be filled with surprises for the entire family. Registration is a must by going to the parish website. The donation is \$20 per family. Seating is limited so register early!

ROCKAWAY MARCH FOR LIFE – The annual "Rockaway March for Life" will take place on Saturday, January 20<sup>th</sup> beginning with the 8 o'clock morning Mass. Following Mass we will gather in Hayes Hall for light refreshments and a brief program before beginning our Rosary walk around Parks Lake. Come join us, with the children, in this public demonstration in support of the sanctity of human life from conception to natural death.

<u>Pope Francis Book</u>—Fr. Zig & Fr. Matt spoke about Pope Francis book entitled, "Christmas at The Nativity". Should you be interested, it can be ordered on Amazon.

<u>OUR CHILDREN</u> – Children should be accompanied by a parent or adult when using the restrooms in the parish hall. We want to make sure that our children return to Mass promptly and safely. Your cooperation is appreciated.

<u>WINTER POLICY</u> - 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, January 8

7:00 pm—Holy Hour (Church)

7:30 pm—Bible Study (Hayes Hall)

Tuesday, January 9

7:00 pm—Confirmation Class (DMA)

Wednesday, January 10

6:00 pm—Taking down of Decorations (Church)

Thursday, January 11

7:00 pm—Anniversary Committee Meeting (Hayes Hall)

Friday, January 12

7:00 pm—Catacombs Youth Group (Church & Hayes Hall)

Saturday, January 13

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

Sunday, January 14

10:30 am—CCD Class (DMA)

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

#### FAMILY PRAYER SERVICE FOR THE BLESSING

**OF THE HOME AT EPIPHANY**: The family gathers in the main room of the house. The father (or mother) of the family begins by inviting everyone to make the sign of the Cross.

*Leader*: In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Response: Amen

**Leader:** During these days of the Christmas season, we keep this feast of Epiphany, celebrating the manifestation of Christ to the magi, to John the Baptist in the River Jordan, and to the disciples at the wedding in Cana. Today Christ is manifest to us! Today this home is a holy place!

*Leader*: Let us pray: Lord our God, bless this household. May we be blessed with health, goodness of heart, gentleness, and the keeping of your Law. We ask in the Name of Jesus who is Lord forever and ever.

Response: Amen

(All may say the Our Father & Hail Mary as the leader sprinkles those present and the rooms of the house.)

The leader takes the blessed chalk and writes the following inscription on the top door post of the main door of the house, K + M + B + 2024 the inscription reminds us of the initials of the Magi (Kasper, Melchior and Balthasar). The three crosses represent the Blessed Trinity

#### Divine Mercy Academy News

The Epiphany of The Lord

#### <u>Divine Mercy Academy's Grandfriends</u> 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@dmarockaway.org.

**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

#### Men's Cornerstone XXIV Retreat

"Do you want to be healed?" is 24-hours of Sharing, Praying and Reflection. Listen to powerful testimonies of men that bring our faith to life. Reflect upon experiences that demonstrate how God is present in our lives, how He is calling you to be healed, and how He is the Cornerstone. Join us in this great opportunity to meet other men who seek a conversion of the heart and strengthening through the Holy Spirit.

January 26 & 27, 2024 at Notre Dame of Mt. Carmel Church, Cedar Knolls, NJ

(Begins 5:30pm Friday evening and culminates at the Saturday 5pm Holy Mass)

Registration online: www.ndcarmel.com or contact: Allwyn Colaco: Allwyncolaco@gmail.com

(732) 322-4920

Phil Lamoureux: plamoureux7@gmail.com

(973) 615 6371

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

COOK BOOK TO BE PUBLISHED – The Saint Monica Guild has embarked upon the production of a cook book which will be published later in the year. Now is the time for the gathering of your favorite recipes which the Saint Monica Guild would like to include, especially your ethnic specialties. Soon a representative from the Saint Monica Guild will speak to us at Sunday Mass regarding this project which will help introduce our parish anniversary celebration!

<u>FOOD PANTRY DONATIONS</u> – 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!

NEWLY INSTALLED ALTAR SERVERS: Grace Wells, Olivia Leuze, Richie Sproul, Lucy Sproul, Emma Banker, Anhphi Vu, Tuly Vu, Corey Sternlicht, Tanner Remick, Lucien Remick, John Paul Mainardi, Nathan Mainardi, Adam Molina and Luiz Molina. Congratulations and thank you to all of you who have responded to the call of being an altar server in our parish. May God bless you, your family and our community in all that you do for us! Fr. Matt

#### Prayer for the Holy Land

Lord, the Holy Land is again struck by violence. Look with mercy upon the land that was Your earthly home.

Receive the deceased into Your presence. Comfort the wounded and the displaced. Hold close to You all who are in despair.

You are our peace and light. put an end to the terror and suffering in the Holy Land and Middle East.

Amen

### "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 20<sup>th</sup>. For more information or to register, contact Charles Malaniak <a href="mailto:cemalaniak@gmail.com">cemalaniak@gmail.com</a>.

#### SAVE THE DATE

Craft & Vendor Fair—St. Cecilia Church Hall 90 Church Street, Rockaway, NJ 07866 Saturday, March 2nd, 2024 9:00 am—2:00 pm For further information, email: saintceciliarosarysociety@gmail.com



My dear parishioners,

On this first Sunday of the New Year 2024 we celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany of the Lord. This feast is traditionally observed on the 6<sup>th</sup> of January (the 12 day of Christmas) but with the reforms to the liturgical calendar following the Second Vatican Council adjustments were made to allow more of the faithful to participate in the feast by transferring it to the nearest Sunday. While talking about changes let me also say that tomorrow, Monday, we will celebrate the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord. Just to confuse you more, next year we will observe this feast on the Sunday following Epiphany. I'm not sure even I understand the logic behind all this.

Prior to 1965, and consistent with the Eastern Churches, the Feast of the Epiphany and the Baptism of the Lord were all commemorated together, along with the first miracle performed by our Lord at the wedding in Cana of Galilee. At all of our Masses this Sunday water will be blessed to recall our Lord's baptism in the Jordan. The holy water may be taken home for devotional purposes and should be used in the prayer service which may be done in the home for the year 2024. Every room of the house should be sprinkled with the holy water. Blessed chalk is also available today with the prayer service which can be found in this bulletin. Ideally this should take place today with children surrounding their parents in the home asking for God's blessing followed by the writing of the inscription (K+M+B+2024) on the main door of the house. These initials stand for the names of the Magi (Kasper, Melchior and Balthazar) whose visit to the Christ Child is commemorated today. In recalling the visit of the Gentile Wise Men to the Christ Child we are reminded that the

"New born King of the Jews" is the Lord of all peoples. This feast reminds us of the universal brotherhood to which God calls us to recognize and to foster. The Apostle Paul reminds us that "there is neither Jew no Gentile" (Galatians 3:28), for we are members of the family of God, brothers and sisters all. The word CATHOLIC means "universal" and so the Church is comprised of people from all nations and cultures. Saint Cecilia's is a beautiful reflection of this with people from every ethnic background calling our parish HOME.

For some members of the Orthodox Church today is Christmas Day and to them we wish God's many blessings!

HAPPY NEW YEAR! CHRIST IS AMONG US – TRULY HE IS AND ALWAYS WILL BE! Father Zig

#### ST. AGNES, Virgin and Martyr January 21 – Patroness of the Children of Mary

ST. AGNES suffered martyrdom during the bloody persecution of the Emperor Diocletian around 304 at the age of thirteen and became one of the best known and most highly regarded of the Roman martyrs. Her name is still retained in the First Eucharistic Prayer for Holy Mass.

The Acts of her Passion, which date back only to the 5<sup>th</sup> century, are considered to be not entirely reliable but they do tell us something about her. The young noblemen of Rome, attracted by her wealth and beauty, vied with one another in endeavoring to obtain her hand in marriage, but she refused them all, saying that she had chosen a Spouse who could not be seen with mortal eyes. Her suitors, in hope of shaking her constancy, accused her of being a Christian.

She was brought before a judge and remained unswayed by either his kindness or his threats. Fires were kindled, instruments of torture were placed before her eyes, but, immovable in her constancy, she surveyed them with heroic calmness. She was sent to a house of prostitution, but the sight of her inspired such awe that not one of the wicked youths of the city dared approach her. One, bolder than the others, was suddenly struck with blindness and he fell trembling.



The youthful Saint came forth from this den of infamy uncontaminated in mind and body, and still a pure spouse of Christ. Her most prominent suitor was so enraged that he incited the judge still more against her. The heroic Virgin was condemned to be beheaded. "She went to the place of execution," says St. Ambrose, "more cheerfully than others go to their wedding."

Amid the tears of the spectators the instrument of death fell, and she went to meet the Immortal Spouse whom she had loved better than her life. She was buried on the Via Nomentana, and Constantine erected a church in her honor.

PRAYER All-powerful and ever-living God, You choose the weak in this world to confound the powerful. As we celebrate the anniversary of the martyrdom of St. Agnes, may we like her remain constant in faith. Amen.

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

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# EPIPHANY



OF THE LORD