

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
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, April 29, Saint Catherine of Siena, Virgin and Doctor of the Church

6:30 am—Bennie Zangara req. by Tina & Ed Kloss

8:00 am—Linda Donatoni req. by Anna Jozwiak

Tuesday, April 30, Blessed Pauline

6:30 am—Special Intention

8:00 am—Deceased Members of the LaFountain Family req. by Agnes Maye

Wednesday, May 1, Saint Joseph the Worker

6:30 am—Sister Christina Marie Cables, SCC

8:00 am—Jimmy Carroll req. by Pat Degnan

Thursday, May 2, Saint Athanasius, Bishop and Doctor of the Church

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

8:00 am—Kathleen Sheridan req. by Roberta Vitcuskys

Friday, May 3, Saints Philip and James, Apostles

6:30 am—Pat Zayac req. by Janet

8:00 am—Janet McCarthy req. by Anna Jozwiak

Saturday, May 4, Easter Weekday

8:00 am—Deceased Members of the Rosary Society

Sunday, May 5, 6th Sunday of Easter

4:30 pm—Linda Donatoni req. by Peggy McKinney

Eleanor Domke req. by Bartholomew Family

7:00 pm—Patricia Zayac req. by Ag Struble & Family

8:00 am—Deceased Members of the McBride Family

9:15 am—Patricia Zayac req. by Graner Family

Claire Dowling req. by Tom & Debi Cummiskey

10:45 am—Berardino Squeo req. by his wife, Marie

Daniel Wright req. by Cox Family

12:15 pm—Rose Spera req. by her sister, Catherine

Gregory Scotese req. by Frank Basnese

ST. CECILIA CHURCH COLLECTION GOALS**Week Ending : April 21, 2024**

Collection—Checks & Cash	\$ 8,634.00
WeShare Electronic Giving	\$ 6,360.88
Total Weekly Collection	\$ 14,994.88

Yearly Collection Goal (BUDGET) \$ 785,000.00

Weekly Goal \$ 14,038.46

Weekly Collection Surplus (Deficit) \$ 956.41**Year To Date Surplus (Deficit)** \$ 752.70

*We are **thankful** for your consistent stewardship.* ©JPPC

MEMORIAL DAY MASS – Holy Mass on Memorial Day, Monday, May 27th will be celebrated at the parish cemetery at 9 o'clock in the morning. This is the only Mass scheduled for this day. Don't forget to bring your lawn chair. In the event of inclement weather the Mass will take place in the church.

SOLEMNITY OF THE LORD'S ASCENSION – The Catholic Bishops in the State of New Jersey have moved the Solemnity of the Lord's Ascension from the 40th Day of Easter to the following Sunday. Therefore, the Ascension is observed on Sunday, May 12th and NOT ON THURSDAY, MAY 9TH!

PRAY FOR THE SICK AND THEIR CAREGIVERS

Ethan Chandra, Dean Wayne Campbell, Doris Cusick, Jane Goricca, 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, 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, Joan Apgar, Richard Sala, Richard Cortese, Kira Woyce, Anthony D'Alessio.



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

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

YOUR SUGGESTIONS, PLEASE! – Our parish's 150th Anniversary Committee is seeking suggestions as to how we might celebrate our 150th 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.

PHOTOS – Our Parish 150th Anniversary Committee is searching for photos from past events which took place at Saint Cecilia's. If you would like to have your photos included or displayed on our parish website, please drop them off or send them to the parish office (90 Church St. Rockaway, 08866) or our parish website (st-cecilia.org). Please include name, event, date and year (if known), phone number and email. All photos will be carefully handled and returned. For additional information please call Rosalie Marmara at 973.625.3836.

We are online: www.st-cecilia.org

MAY ROSARY DEVOTION—The Rosary Society invited you to join with them in opening the month of May, dedicated to Our Lady, with the praying of the Holy Rosary on Wednesday evening May 1st at 7:00 pm at Sacred Heart of Jesus Church on East Main Street. ALSO, to conclude the month of May the Holy Rosary will be prayed in Saint Cecilia Church on Friday, May 31st at 7:00 pm.

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:**



PARISH ANNIVERSARY PILGRIMAGE – In conjunction with our parish's 150th anniversary celebration next year I will be leading a pilgrimage to Italy. We leave from Newark International Airport on Monday, April 21 (2025) for our 11 day visit to Rome, Assisi, San Giovanni Rotondo (St. Padre Pio), Bari (Shrine of St. Nicholas) and many more stops. This 11 day pilgrimage coincides with the Holy Year Jubilee in which we will also visit and celebrate Mass in the Basilica of Saint Cecilia. The cost per person is \$5,384. Please visit the 206 TOURS website and enter tour #sp042125 for the itinerary, registration and other information. I hope you will join me on this faith-filled tour! We return on Thursday, May 1st thanking God for this wonderful experience. – Father Zig

A PLACE FOR THE DISABLED – I am currently investigating the accommodation which can be offered to the handicapped in church. Currently it is very difficult for those using walkers or wheelchairs to find a place in our liturgical assembly. I am working with a pew company to conform our present furniture into handicapped accessible seating. I will be sharing information with you in the coming weeks regarding this project. – Father Zig

HEALING MASS – The Christian Care Committee will sponsor our annual Healing Mass for the Sick and their Care-Givers on Saturday, May 11th at 11 o'clock in the morning. During the Mass the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick will be administered. Following the liturgy a light reception will take place in Hayes Hall to which all are invited.

Second Collection: Please be generous in this week's special collection for the Catholic Campaign for Human Development. In the United States over 11% of the population live in poverty. Through this collection, you support programs that address the root causes of poverty and provide a sustainable future for those struggling across the country. In addition, 25% of the funds we collect remain in our diocese to fund local anti-poverty projects. Please prayerfully consider how you can support this collection and those working on the margins. For more information about the Catholic Campaign for Human Development can be found at www.usccb.org/cchd

MAY DEVOTIONS – The Litany to the Blessed Virgin Mary will be prayed during the month of May following the 8 o'clock morning Mass, Monday through Friday. The month of May is dedicated to the Mother of God and Ever Virgin Mary.

PIO PRAYER GROUP – The Saint Padre Pio Prayer Group will meet on Wednesday, May 1st at 10 o'clock in the morning in the votive chapel located at the entrance of the church. All are welcome to join us in prayer and discussion regarding the spirituality of this powerful heavenly intercessor.

Monday, April 29

7:00 pm—Hour Hour (Church)

7:30 pm—Bible Study (Hayes Hall)

Tuesday, April 30

9:30 am—Bible Study (Hayes Hall)

12:00 pm—Seniors Meeting (Hayes Hall)

5:00 pm—FHC Rehearsal (Church)

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

Wednesday, May 1

10:00 am—St. Padre Pio Prayer Group (Church)

7:00 pm—Rosary Service (Sacred Heart Church)

Thursday, May 2**Friday, May 3****Saturday, May 4**

8:30 am—Rosary Society Meeting (Hayes Hall)

10:00 am—First Holy Communion, CCD (Church)

12:00 pm—First Holy Communion, CCD (Church)

Sunday, May 5

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

8:00 pm—LTP (Parish Office)

PLANNED GIVING FOR OUR PARISH – Planned giving is the practice of designating a gift to a charitable organization during one's lifetime or as a part of an estate plan. The gift could include cash, wills, bequests, stocks, retirement assets, real estate, life insurance, annuities equity or personal property. This act of philanthropy serves as a meaningful way to honor your Catholic faith and create a memorial. Donors can minimize capital gains tax when transferring assets as part of a planned gift, further maximizing the contribution to charity. As you think about such matters I hope you will remember our parish, your spiritual home. – Father Zig

RUN TO THE FATHER—Prayer Service/Holy Hour for our children and grandchildren who fallen away from the faith on Sunday, April 28 at 3:00 p.m. at Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, Rockaway.

THANK YOU – Many thanks to Carmela Malaniak for preparing the “World Day of Prayer for Vocations” poster which was commemorated last Sunday. The poster featured the two vocations we currently have from our parish namely, Ben Duphiney who is a novice with the Franciscan Capuchian Friars and Andy Kling who is in the priest discernment program at Franciscan University. “Thank you” Mel for the beautiful poster!

DOOR COLLECTION – Member of the Knights of Columbus, Council 514, will conduct a door collection after Masses on Saturday and Sunday, May 25 and 26 to benefit Veteran programs. Your donation is in appreciation for their military service.

Divine Mercy Academy News

Join us for our Open House & Academic Showcase on Sunday, May 19th from 10:30am to 12:30pm! Come see the difference an academically excellent Catholic education makes! Divine Mercy Academy is a Catholic elementary school offering a comprehensive Pre-K through 8th grade faith-based education. 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; Social Emotional Learning & library, with technology integrated throughout the curriculum. Aftercare and extracurricular activities available. Full day & Half Day Pre-K3 & Pre-K4 programs available. Full Day Kindergarten. Transfer grants available for public school students transferring into grades 1-8. We are located at 87 Halsey Avenue in Rockaway. Visit our website at www.dmarockaway.org or call 973-627-6003 for more information.

New student registration ongoing for 2024-2025

Call or email us to schedule a tour, shadow day or for more information:



973-627-6003

jpatel@dmrockaway.org

aservidio@dmrockaway.org

dmrockaway.org

Registration for Religious Education classes for 2024-2025 will be opening soon. Be sure to check the web site for more details under the Faith Formation tab.

st-cecilia.org

SUMMER BIBLE CAMP—Save the date for Summer Bible Camp for children ages 4 to 12. Bible Camp will be held on June 25th, 26th, 27th and 28th from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm. Registration will be forthcoming in the bulletin and on our web-site.

Our Condolences to the Family of:

Carmela Turngren

Eternal Rest Grant to her Lord

ARE YOU REGISTERED? – Saint Cecilia’s is the best parish in the Diocese of Paterson! I know that I am prejudiced but I truly believe this and I hope you do too! We welcome all people to our parish and are delighted each time new members join our faith community. My question is to all, **ARE YOU REGISTERED AS A PARISHIONER?** If you are not sure, please give the parish office a call (973.627.0313) and speak with Janet or Diane to check and to update any information regarding yourself, such as phone number and e mail address, etc. This information is most helpful for me in providing pastoral care to you and your family. Your parish registration is also necessary when you may be asked to submit a “certificate of eligibility” to serve as a godparent/sponsor. If I do not have your registration information then this can become a difficulty. The Registration form may be found on line by going to the parish website or by receiving a copy from the parish office. Your completed registration form may be mailed to the parish office or placed in the collection basket on Sunday. **Register and be counted** among those who love and support Saint Cecilia’s! – FATHER ZIG

CONFIRMATION – His Excellency, Bishop Kevin Sweeney will confer the sacrament of confirmation to a group of our young parishioners on Friday, May 24th at 7 o’clock in the evening. We pray that the Holy Spirit will inflame the confirmands with a lively faith making them true disciples of Jesus Christ.

CONGRATULATIONS – Our prayers and best wishes to our children who have received their First Holy Communion. May Christ, the Bread of Life, bless them and may they always yearn to be fed with the Bread of Life who has come down from heaven.

BYZANTINE LITURGY – Members of the Monday evening Bible Study group will accompany Father Zig to Saint Ann Melkite Greek Catholic Church in Woodland Park for the celebration of the Vigil of the Ascension on Wednesday, May 8th for the Vesper Liturgy which begins at 7 o’clock in the evening. Car pooling will be the means of transportation with departure from Saint Cecilia parking lot at 6 o’clock. Father Zig has biritual faculties from Rome to serve in the Byzantine Church. See Father Zig for additional information.

DROP BOX IN PLACE – A “drop box” has been positioned near the right side of the front door of the parish office. The box will serve as a place where communications can be picked-up or left-off after office hours.

SAVE THE DATE – Although it’s early, you may want to save the date for “DANIEL” at the Sight and Sound Theater in Pennsylvania. The Saint Monica Guild will conduct a bus trip to view this highly rated production on Friday, September 20, 2024. For information please call Janet at the parish office, 973-627-0313

REOPENING OF ST. THERESE MINISTRY
TUESDAY, MAY 7TH AT 1:00 P.M.

The reopening of the St. Therese Ministry begins on Tuesday, May 7th at 1:00 p.m. at St. Catherine of Siena Church in Mountain Lakes. The address is 10 North Pocono Road. We will meet each and every Tuesday until the end of the year. We will once again be praying the Novena to St. Therese, a prayer for our nation, the Memorare and finish with the Rosary. America needs our prayers. Father Edward Rama, who is from the Diocese of Paterson, will be speaking. Come join us for fellowship and meet some wonderful people. We have many events planned for the ministry. Please mark your calendar for Sunday, September 29th at 1:45 p.m. when Bishop Kevin Sweeney will celebrate two feast days – St. Therese the Little Flower and St. Michael the Archangel. It will not be a mass – a presentation and celebration by the Bishop. It will be a spectacular event at St. Catherine of Siena Church in Mountain Lakes!! Any questions, please call Carol Bsarany 973-271-9252.

SHREDDING EVENT

Saturday, May 18th from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm
St. Cecilia Church Parking Lot
90 Church Street, Rockaway, NJ 07866
Sponsored by Men’s Society
\$ Donations Accepted \$

PARISH PICNIC & CORPUS CHRISTI CELEBRATION

– Sunday, June 2nd is the Feast Corpus Christi and the day of our annual parish picnic with Sacred Heart parish. Plans are still being developed regarding this day’s devotion and activities. Please mark the event in your calendar. Additional information will be printed shortly.

ANNUAL DIOCESAN FOOD DRIVE – The annual diocesan Corpus Christi Food Drive is currently underway to replenish the various food banks run by Catholic Charities in the Diocese of Paterson. Once again our parish has been asked to donate the following items: pancake mix, pancake syrup and shampoo. These items may be placed on the designated tables in Hayes Hall prior to Sunday, June 2nd. ALSO, the diocese is appealing for monetary donations to benefit this cause. You may go to the diocesan website (www.patersondiocese.org); our parish website (st-cecilia.org); OR by placing your check payable to “St. Cecilia Church” and in the memo: “food drive” in the offering basket on Sunday.



My dear parishioners,

We gather on the Fifth Sunday of Easter for our observance of the Lord's Day with the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. The Scriptural texts speak to us about "connectedness." In the Gospel passage the Lord Jesus describes to His listeners how intimately they are connected with Him as branches on a vine. We, His followers, are part of Christ and are able to produce the fruits which the Lord Himself produced during His ministry. However, if we separate ourselves from Him we ourselves will wither because we have cut ourselves off from Christ, "the Way, the Truth and the Life."

The Evangelist John tells us in his first epistle that we are indeed children of God and that we should demonstrate this in our deeds and in the truth that we live. This truth which we possess is found in Christ Jesus who gave His life for our salvation. He it is who summons us to live in conformity to the Commandments by loving God and one another. Devastation comes when we fail to live in this truth both personally and as a society. Failing to love brings us in collusion with the devil who brings animosity and division.

In our Easter reading of Acts of the Apostles we once again visit the Early Church and see that doubting the truth of Saul's conversion brings distrust among some. However, because of the charity demonstrated in the lives of the Apostles and disciples Saul is received by the community. The Church's fraternal and Christ-like way of life brings a special peace issued by the Holy Spirit which connects them to one another.

Our connectedness to Christ is most wonderfully shown in our reception of the Most Holy Eucharist. Receiving the Lord Jesus in Holy Communion is our oneness with Him in whom we can do all things because of the strength we receive from Him. The children of our parish have received their First Holy Communion last Saturday and will continue with two additional classes this coming Saturday. I pray that their faith will be made strong as they observe us as we worship and show reverence to Christ in the Most Blessed Sacrament. Our Eucharistic faith is that which unites us as Catholics and descendants of the Christians of the First Century.

As we begin the month of May which is dedicated to our Blessed Mother let us pray through her intercession that we may be authentic teachers to our young people of those Christ has called to live the truth in a world which accommodates falsehood, and even glamorizes it.

CHRIST IS RISEN-TRULY HE IS RISEN!

Father Zig

*St. Athanasius,
May 2 - Bishop and Doctor of the Church*

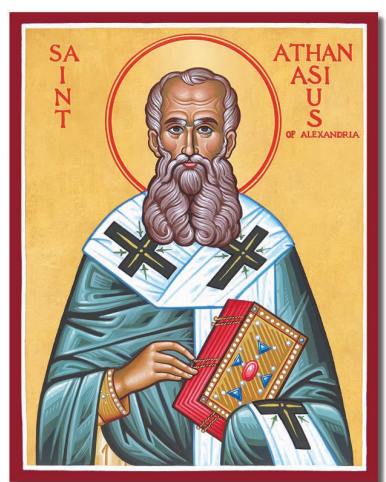
St. Athanasius, the great champion of the Faith, was born at Alexandria, about the year 296, of Christian Parents. Educated under the eye of Alexander, later Bishop of his native city, he made great progress in learning and virtue. In 313, Alexander succeeded Achillas in the Patriarchal See, and two years later St. Athanasius went to the desert to spend some time in retreat with St. Anthony.

In 319, he became a deacon, and even in this capacity he was called upon to take an active part against the rising heresy of Arius, and ambitious priest of the Alexandrian Church who denied the Divinity of Christ. This was to be the life struggle of St. Athanasius.

In 325, he assisted his Bishop at the Council of Nicaea, where his influence began to be felt. Five months later Alexander died; on his deathbed he recommended St. Athanasius as his successor. In consequence of this Athanasius was unanimously elected Patriarch in 326.

His refusal to tolerate the Arian heresy was the cause of many trials and persecutions for St. Athanasius. He spent seventeen of the forty six years of his episcopate in exile. After a life of virtue and suffering, this intrepid champion of the Catholic Faith, the greatest man of his time, died in peace on May 2, 373.

PRAYER Father, You gave us St. Athanasius, Your Bishop, to defend the Divinity of Your Son. Grant that we may enjoy his teaching and protection and grow continually In our knowledge and love of You. Amen



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

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