

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

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 (Sept. to June)

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 (Sept. to June)

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

Parish Summer Office Hours:

Starting after Memorial Day until Labor Day

Monday thru Thursday: 8:30—4:00

(Lunch 12:00—1:00)

Friday: Closed

Monday, July 29, Saints Martha, Mary and Lazarus

6:30 am – Helen O'Connor req. by Shivas Family

8:00 am - Patricia Zayac req. by Marilyn Whelan

Tuesday, July 30, Saint Peter Chrysologus, Bishop and Doctor of the Church

6:30 am – Deceased members of the Salvesen Family

8:00 am – Terence Haran req. by Peggy McKinney

Wednesday, July 31, Saint Ignatius of Loyola, Priest

6:30 am – Deceased Members of the Will Family

8:00 am – Kathy Deo req. by husband, Pat

Thursday, August 1, Saint Alphonsus Liguori, Bishop and Doctor of the Church

6:30 am – Holy Souls in Purgatory req. by Agnes Maye

8:00 am – Philomena Killeen req. by Marilyn Whelan

Friday, August 2, Saint Eusebius of Vercelli, Bishop; Saint Peter Julian Eymard, Priest

6:30 am – Special Intention

8:00 am – Patricia Zayac req. by Carol & Gary McGotty

Saturday, August 3, Weekday

8:00 am – Deceased Members of the Rosary Society

Sunday, August 4, Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

4:30 am – Concetta Sossong req. by Gloria & Bill Stahl

Wayne Faulkner req. by Seligmuller Family

7:00 pm – Ancelma Morales req. by her Granddaughter & Family

John McCarthy req. by Debra Sammy

8:00 am – Robert & Rena Benjamin req. by Bob & Tom Benjamin

9:15 am – Ethan Marcel Bonnet req. by Graner Family

Eileen Traino req. by McDonnell Family

10:45 am – Wes Bennett req. by Pat Deo

Florence Guarducci req. by Jim Gallagher

12:15 pm – Adolf DeMarco req. by Bobbie

Betty Golden req. by Rosalie & Bob Marmara

St. Cecilia Church Collection Goals**Week Ending: July 21, 2024****Due to the early publication of the bulletin, the collections totals for the week will be shown next week. Thank you!****Diocesan Ministries Appeal****2023 Parish Goal: \$42,885****Cash Received as of June 28, 2024: \$110,848****March 2024 Rebate (if applicable): \$30,432****Final June 2024 Rebate Enclosed: \$3,550**

THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS – Recognizing a vital practical need in his community, 29 year old Father Michael McGivney proposed establishing a lay organization, the goal of which would be to unite men of Catholic faith and to provide for the families of deceased members. To symbolize that allegiance to their country did not conflict with allegiance to their faith, the organization took as its patron Christopher Columbus, who was recognized as a Catholic and celebrated as the discoverer of the Americas. Thanks to Father McGivney's persistence, the Knights of Columbus officially assumed corporate status in 1882.

For information on the Knights of Columbus please go to www.KofC.org/joinus. Saint Cecilia Parish is served by two councils: #3359-Our Lady of the Lakes Council (Denville) and #514-Lafayette Council (Wharton). ALL CATHOLIC MEN ARE ENCOURAGED TO SEEK MEMBERSHIP IN THE KNIGHTS!

**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, 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, 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, Jenn Suto, Colin Brown, Marie Shubilla.



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.

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.

CHUCK LINNELL – Our music minister, Chuck Linnell, has informed me that he is stepping down from his position effective September 1st. We have been blessed with Chuck's ministry at Saint Cecilia's for the past seven years. Chuck and his family are members of our parish so we will continue to see them and occasionally benefit from Chuck's musical talent. Let us pray that Saint Cecilia, Patroness of our parish and of Church Music, will send us a worthy replacement! – Father Zig

HOLY DAY – The Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary into Heaven will be observed in our parish with a Vigil Mass on Wednesday, August 14th at 4:30 p.m. Holy Masses on Thursday, August 15th will be celebrated in the morning at 6:30 and 8 o'clock. Holy Mass will also be celebrated in the evening at 7 o'clock. This is a HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION!

NEXT SUNDAY – As the poster in the church vestibule attests we have two young men who are pursuing a vocation in religious life and holy orders. Brother Ben Duphney is a novice for the Franciscan Capuchin Friars and will be home for a short visit with his family next week. I have asked him to speak briefly at the 8 and 9:15 Masses next Sunday to share his witness regarding a vocation to the religious life. – Father Zig

**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:**



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

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

CATHOLIC IN RECOVERY – We welcome Catholics who are interested in recovery from addiction and deepening their relationship with Jesus Christ and the Catholic Church. "Catholic In Recovery" is a non-profit organization that seeks to serve those suffering from addictions and unhealthy attachments including: alcoholism, drug addiction, pornography addiction, sex and relationship addiction, compulsive overeating and food addictions, gambling addiction, codependency and the impact on family, and general fear, control and anxiety. It is the aim of "Catholic in Recovery" to share the Good News that God can bring about healing and recovery, even in the most hopeless cases. Questions? Email CIR@ollsparta.org. Meetings: Our Lady of the Lake, 294 Sparta Ave. Saturdays: 7:30 am to 8:30 am AND Thursdays 6:30 pm to 7:30 pm. ALSO meeting at Our Lady Queen of Peace, 209 Route 206 South, Branchville, Mondays 6:30 pm to 7:30 pm.

MISSION COOPERATIVE APPEAL – Every August the Missionary Cooperative Appeal is conducted in all the parishes of the Diocese of Paterson. This year's appeal will take place on August 10-11 with a representative of the Marian Missionaries of the Holy Cross visiting us and speaking to us about their work in the proclamation of the Gospel. Father John, a priest from the Archdiocese of Los Angeles and a member of this religious order will be with us for the weekend. **WELCOME, FATHER JOHN!**

Registration for Religious Education classes for 2024-2025 is open now. Please go to the web site to register under the Faith Formation tab.

st-cecilia.org

Monday, July 29
Tuesday, July 30
 7:45 pm—*Light of Christ Prayer Group (HH)*
Wednesday, July 31
Thursday, August 1
Friday, August 2
Saturday, August 3
Sunday, August 4

4 DAY WALKING PILGRIMAGE – Saints Peter and Paul Church in Great Meadows (Warren County) will once again host the spiritual 4-day walking pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Czestochowa in Doylestown, Pennsylvania. August 8-11. This annual event coincides with the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (August 14-15). Pilgrims (walkers) range from infants to people well into their 70's. For additional information please call 908.637.4269 or www.walkingpilgrimage.us.

VIEW THE VOWS – Sister John Paul and the Sisters of Christian Charity invite you to join them remotely for the Profession of Vows on Thursday, August 15th at 10:30 a.m. For livestream please go to <https://scus.org/videos>. Sister John Paul will be making her final profession on this day and we offer our congratulations and prayer-filled best wishes.

BEYOND THE BEACON – Bishop Kevin Sweeney has a regular podcast entitled, BEYOND THE BEACON which has interesting guests and great topics. Also, check out COFFEE WITH KUPKE and THE PAUL STREET JOURNAL on your preferred podcast platforms, such as Apple Podcasts or Spotify OR watch it on YOUTUBE.

Empowering and serving pregnant women in need. Can you spare 3 hours a week?

 Life Advocates of NJ

Sidewalk Advocates are desperately needed to serve as a beacon of hope and help to abortion-bound women entering the Pilgrim Abortion Clinic in Montclair. The team of LIFE ADVOCATES OF NJ's mission is to empower these troubled women, many of whom are in poverty and facing unsurmountable obstacles, having little or no support. Through the efforts of faithful volunteers, countless babies (and their mothers) have been spared from physical, emotional and spiritual scars of abortion. Volunteers are needed early mornings, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Training and literature handouts are provided free by Life Advocates of New Jersey. **If you feel called to this special ministry, please contact Adrianna Rowatti, Director: 845-680-6491 office, lifeadvocatesnj@protonmail.com www.lifeadvocatesnj.org**

Divine Mercy Academy News

Registration for the 2024-2025 school year at Divine Mercy Academy in Rockaway is now open!

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 & library, with technology integrated throughout the curriculum. Aftercare and extracurricular activities available.

Transfer Grants and Scholarships are available to eligible students.

Full day & Half Day Pre-K3 & Pre-K4 programs available. Full Day Kindergarten. We are located at 87 Halsey Avenue in Rockaway. Visit our website at www.dmarockaway.org or call 973-627-6003 for more information.

Divine Mercy Academy has the following openings for the 2024-2025 school year:

Middle school social studies teacher
Part-time art teacher
Part-time afterschool care aides

If interested, please contact Amy Servidio at aservidio@dmarockaway.org or call 973-627-6003. In addition, please send your cover letter, resume, and certifications to aservidio@dmarockaway.org

RESPECT LIFE CORNER

WHO: Hosted by MARCH FOR LIFE – ALL ARE WELCOME

WHAT: Paterson Diocese New Jersey March for Life
Where: Trenton, NJ

WHEN: SEPTEMBER 26, 2024

Mass: 9:30 AM **Rally:** 11:00 AM **March for Life:** 12:00 PM
 The Dobbs Decision of June 24, 2022 reversed the Roe V. Wade decision of 1973. Come join us in our March for Life in Trenton as we peacefully rally and march for the dignity of the human person.

HOW: RSVP and reserve a roundtrip bus ride, go to insidethe walls.org/njmarchforlife

A head count is needed to reserve the buses.

Please register ASAP.

Roundtrip bus: \$35.00 person
Enter payment as a student donation.

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

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!

MEMORIAL OFFERING – Two sets of Mass linens, manufactured by the Slabbink Company of Belgium, (pall, corporal, purificator and lavabo towel) were donated by Mr. and Mrs. David Sproul & Family in memory of Francesca Mary Perazzi. We thank them for this memorial gift which will be used for the celebration of the Holy Mass.

KIOSK – The kiosk located in the church vestibule has been recently refreshed with new materials for your spiritual edification and devotion. Your donation for the material may be placed in the receptacle located at the bottom of the kiosk.

JULY 28 – The 5 o’clock Sunday Mass in Vietnamese will not take place on July 28th. The regular schedule resumes next week.

A SPACE FOR THE HANDICAPPED – Through my pastoral observations and experiences I have concluded that a suitable space is needed in our church for our handicapped parishioners. Accommodation must be made to allow those who use walkers, wheelchairs and other aids to attend Divine Services safely and comfortably. At the recent meeting of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops the hierarchs reaffirmed their concern that the disabled to be part of the worshipping community and that every effort should be made to accommodate them. I have met with the company which services our pews and have agreed with their proposal that the first pew on the right side (Altar of Saint Joseph) be altered. The entire first seat will be removed so as to provide sufficient access for walkers and wheelchairs. Signage will indicate that this pew is reserved for the handicapped only! This work will begin in the next few weeks. – Father Zig

OUR CHILDREN – 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.

FIRST FRIDAY VISITS – Father Matt and I visit the homebound on the first Friday of every month with the Holy Eucharist and the availability for confession as well. Should you or someone you know like for the priest to visit them on first Friday, please call the parish office and leave your name and phone number so that we may add you to our schedule. – Fr. Zig

Come join the Sisters of Christian Charity for their 11th Annual Golf Outing and Inaugural Pickleball Clinic and Round Robin at Fiddler’s Elbow Country Club, Bedminster, NJ, on Monday, September 23, 2024. For more information go to <https://www.sccus.org/golf>.

FATHER AND SON CATHOLIC CAMP – The diocesan vocations office is sponsoring a summer outing for fathers and sons open to young men 13 and older and their fathers. Minors must be accompanied by a male guardian. Campers provide their own tent and sleeping bag. Meals included. Registration deadline is JULY 31. Registration is required. WHEN: August 9-11 at Wawayanda State Park in Hewitt, NJ. Outdoor Mass with Bishop Kevin Sweeney. Program of activities is planned. Register by calling 973.777.8818x711 or vocations@patersondiocese.org.

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.



My dear parishioners,

We have assembled in our church for the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass on this 17th Sunday in Ordinary Time. The Gospel reading for the next five weeks will come from the 6th chapter of the Gospel of Saint John known as “the Bread of Life Discourse.” The chapter begins with the miraculous feeding of the multitude of people (5,000 in number) with only five barley loaves and two fish. This miracle performed by the Lord Jesus is recorded in all four Gospels and is an indication to us of the importance of this event by the Early Church. It is important because it points to the Holy Eucharist which the Church celebrated from its earliest days. The Eucharist is the real presence of Jesus among us: body, soul and divinity. In the real presence of Christ in the Most Blessed Sacrament we find the source of our unity in faith. In today’s epistle reading from the Letter to the Ephesians the Apostle Paul reminds us of this communion we share with one another. As baptized believers we share the Eucharist because we share a common faith, it is the faith which comes to us from the Apostles.

In both the Old Testament reading from the Second Book of Kings and the Gospel we read that the Lord provided bread for the people from a small amount. The Lord did not want the people to become famished as they journeyed so He miraculously provided nourishment from an apparently simple source. The Catholic Church and the Churches of the East have always seen the Holy Eucharist as the Lord Jesus among us, the sacrament which we worship and adore. We also see in both Scripture readings that the remnants of what was miraculously confectioned was gathered up and not discarded. So too with us, the Eucharist which remains after the liturgy is reverently reserved in the tabernacle to be given to the sick as well as for adoration within the church.

In the wake of the Eucharistic Congress which was held earlier this month in Indianapolis, the liturgy will serve as a wonderful reminder to us of the gift of the Holy Eucharist. In the “Bread of Life Discourse” we will hear the Master’s own words regarding the Eucharist and the invitation for us to feed on Him who nourishes us on our journey to eternity.

“You have given them Bread from heaven, having within it all sweetness!”

GLORY TO JESUS CHRIST-GLORY FOREVER!

Father Zig

ST. LAWRENCE, Martyr
August 10—Patron of the Poor and of Cooks

In 257, when St. Sixtus became Pope, he ordained St. Lawrence deacon, and though he was still young appointed him the first of the seven deacons who served in the Church of Rome. To this office was annexed the care of the treasury of the Church and the distribution of its revenues among the poor. In that same year, the Emperor Valerian published his edict of persecution and commanded all Bishops, priests, and deacons to be put to death immediately. St. Sixtus was arrested twelve months later. As the holy man was led to execution, St. Lawrence followed him in tears. Sixtus at the same time ordered him to distribute the treasures of the Church among the poor. St. Lawrence did as he was commanded, selling even the sacred vessels to increase the sum.

At that time the Church of Rome, besides providing for its ministers, maintained fifteen hundred poor people and even sent alms to distant countries. The Prefect of Rome commanded St. Lawrence to surrender the treasures of the Church, and he promised to show them to him. On the third day, instead of gold and silver he exhibited the poor whom he had gathered together.

The enraged Prefect commanded that he should be slowly roasted on a gridiron. The order was mercilessly executed but the martyr, strengthened by Divine grace, endured his suffering with heroic fortitude and even found strength to jest at the expense of his torments and his persecutor. To his last breath the holy deacon prayed for the conversion of the city of Rome, that the Faith of Christ might thence spread throughout the world. Several senators, who had witnessed his execution, were converted to Christianity and gave decent burial to his body. His martyrdom occurred in the year 258.

PRAYER God, by his ardent love for You St. Lawrence exhibited faithful service and attained a glorious martyrdom. Help us to love what he loved and to practice what he taught. Amen.

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