

# Saint Cecilia Parish

90 Church Street  
Rockaway, New Jersey 07866

Parish Office: 973-627-0313 Website: [st-cecilia.org](http://st-cecilia.org) — Office: [stcec@optonline.net](mailto:stcec@optonline.net)  
To Contact: Fr. Zig: Ext. 12 or [speplowski@optonline.net](mailto:speplowski@optonline.net)  
Fr. Matt: Ext 15 or [frmateuszdarlak@gmail.com](mailto: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  
YOUTH PROTECTION &  
SAFE ENVIRONMENT  
COORDINATOR

**Mr. James Clancy**  
DIRECTOR OF FAITH FORMATION

**Mr. Nikolaos Brown**  
MUSIC DIRECTOR

**Mrs. Diane Boykow**  
CEMETERY ADMINISTRATOR  
STAFF ASSISTANT

**Mrs. Kelly Cacella**  
PRINCIPAL



## 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 @ 3:00—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)

OCIA—ORDER OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION— FOR

ADULTS:

Please contact Sr. Diane — [sdmoughan@gmail.com](mailto:sdmoughan@gmail.com)

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 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 16, Advent Weekday**

6:30 am—Special Intention

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

**Tuesday, December 17, Late Advent Weekday**

6:30 am—For the parishioners of St. Cecilia Church

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

**Wednesday, December 18, Late Advent Weekday**

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

8:00 am—Irene Shucavage req. by Ron Piaskowski

**Thursday, December 19, Late Advent Weekday**

6:30 am—Maureen &amp; Malcolm Carolan

8:00 am—Leo P. & Helen Vitcuskys req. by their daughter,  
Roberta**Friday, December 20, Late Advent Weekday**

6:30 am—Veronica Morgante &amp; Marie Shubilla

8:00 am—Aaron Matloksky req. by DMA Faculty, Staff &  
Students**Saturday, December 21, Saint Peter Canisius, Priest and Doctor of the Church**

8:00 am—Manny &amp; Victoria Santana req. by Family

**Sunday, December 22, Fourth Sunday of Advent**

4:30 pm—Jack &amp; Pat Zayac req. by Family

Michael &amp; Bernadette Miller req. by Family

7:00 pm—Joseph Bartholomew req. by his Wife &amp; Daughter

Peter Joseph Laurino req. by Glauca &amp; Michael Kelly

8:00 am—Edward Breslauer req. by his Wife, Noreen

9:15 am—David Lewis req. by Family

Rosemary &amp; Martin Matis req. by their Daughter

10:45 am—Mario Zambrano req. by Family

12:15 pm—Philipp &amp; Marion Cables

**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, 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 Salvessen, 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, John Sandelli, Alan Zenkert, Fran Gatzke, Bob Nielsen, Gert Taylor, Walter Zelinski, 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, Colin Brown, Anthony Gerardi, Olivia Gerardi, Katherine Lynn, Sophie Boylan, Michael Gatzke, Philip Colombrito, Esperanza Vertucci, Molly Mack, Michele Murray, Jimmy Olgeluie, Mark Howarth, Logan Mattessich.

**ST. CECILIA CHURCH COLLECTION GOALS****Week Ending : December 1, 2024**

Collection—Checks & Cash	\$ 9,855.00
WeShare Electronic Giving	\$ 5,486.25
<b>Total Weekly Collection</b>	<b>\$ 15,341.25</b>

Yearly Collection Goal (BUDGET)	\$ 785,000.00
Weekly Goal	\$ 14,313.73

<b>Weekly Collection Surplus (Deficit)</b>	<b>\$ 1,026.52</b>
<b>Year To Date Surplus (Deficit)</b>	<b>\$ 7,497.40</b>

**St. Cecilia Church Collection Goals****Week Ending: December 8, 2024**

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



*The Sanctuary Candle burning on our altar  
this week is in loving memory of  
**Laura Buro & Thomas Boykow**  
Req. by Charles & Mary Lou McGrath*



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

**THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD**  
***Christmas Mass Schedule – 2024***

**Tuesday, December 24th:**

Holy Masses for the Solemnity of the Lord's Nativity  
 3:00, 4:30, 7:00 & 10:00 pm  
 (Christmas Carols at 9:30 pm)

**Wednesday, December 25<sup>th</sup>:**

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

**Tuesday, December 31<sup>st</sup>:**

Holy Mass for the Solemnity of Mary Mother of God  
 4:30 pm

**Wednesday, January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025:**

Holy Mass for the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God  
 At 8:00 & 10:00 am



Our Condolences to the Family of  
**Maureen Carolan, Joan Carroll & Augustyn Bizon**  
 Eternal Rest Grant to them Lord

**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*

**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*

**RORATE MASS** – The 6:30 morning Mass, Monday through Friday, will be celebrated in honor of the Mother of God and Ever Virgin Mary. This Advent Mass is known as the “Rorate Mass” which is Latin for “drop down dew...” taken from Isaiah 45:8. This Mass is celebrated before the sun comes up with a special candle lighted before the image of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

**NO HOLY HOUR** – Monday evening Holy Hour **WILL NOT TAKE PLACE** on December 23 and 30. Please take note that the Monday evening Holy Hour will return on January 6<sup>th</sup>.

**ONE DAILY MASS** – Please note that only one weekday Mass will be celebrated at 8 o'clock in the morning on December 26 thru 31. The 6:30 morning Mass will return on January 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**5<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY ROSARY** – The “5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the Month Rosary” will take place on Sunday, December 29<sup>th</sup> at 3 o'clock in the afternoon in Sacred Heart of Jesus Church on East Main Street. The 30 minute service will include praying the Rosary and the Divine Mercy Chaplet. The event is sponsored by the Knights of Columbus, Council 3359. All are welcome to join us in prayer.

**SAINT CECILIA PRESENTS...** - The fourth and final program of our fall “Saint Cecilia Presents...” series will take place on Thursday evening, December 19<sup>th</sup> in Hayes Hall at 7 o'clock. Sister GERALYN SCHMIDT, SCC will speak on the 1,700 anniversary of the Council of Nicea and the Nicene Creed. Sister is the Assistant President at Assumption College for Sisters in Denville and the Director of Formation for the wives of the Diaconate in the Diocese of Harrisburg (Pennsylvania) as well as a contributor to the *Catholic Witness*, the newspaper for the Diocese of Harrisburg.

**CHRISTMAS ORNAMENT** – In honor of our parish's 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary a commemorative Christmas ornament has been produced and is on sale for \$20. The glass ornament is a representation of the Saint Cecilia stained glass window which is located in our church choir loft with the name of the parish and the anniversary designation 1875-2025. This is a limited edition so get yours today!



**Monday, December 16**

7:00 pm—Advent Penance Service (Church)

**Tuesday, December 17**

12:00 pm—Seniors Meeting (Hayes Hall)

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

**Wednesday, December 18**

8:30 am—Soup Kitchen (Hayes Hall)

**Thursday, December 19**

10:00 am—School Confessions (Church)

**Friday, December 20**

6:00 pm—Altar Server Training (Church)

**Saturday, December 21**

St. Monica Guild Bake Sale after all the Masses

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

**Sunday, December 22**

6:30 pm—Christmas Decorating (Church)

**ADVENT CANDLELIGHT SERVICE**—You are invited to join the Sisters of Christian Charity on Sunday, December 15th, at 4:00 pm, 350 Bernardsville Road, Mendham, NJ, for a Candlelight Advent Service. Please RSVP: 973.230.5355

**JUBILEE BANNER** – The 2025 Jubilee Year of Hope Banner will be displayed in the sanctuary of the church from Christmas Eve until the end of the Jubilee Year, January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2026. Our thanks to the Rosary Society for donating the jubilee banner.

**Retirement Fund for Religious: Women and men religious offer gratitude.** “Sincere thanks to the donors of the Retirement Fund for Religious. I hope we meet, if not in this world, then in the next,” says Sister Teresa Korycka, 81, of the Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate. Your gift impacts over 24,000 senior women and men religious, providing them a dignified retirement. To learn how your donations helps, visit [retiredreligious.org](http://retiredreligious.org)

**PARISH ANNIVERSARY PILGRIMAGE** – In conjunction with our parish’s 150<sup>th</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup> thanking God for this wonderful experience. – Father Zig

## 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](http://www.dmarockaway.org) or call 973-627-6003 for more information.

**DIOCESAN JUBILEE MASS** – His Excellency, Bishop Kevin Sweeney is inviting you to join with him and people from throughout the Diocese of Paterson for the celebration of the Holy Mass on Sunday, December 29<sup>th</sup> at 3 o’clock in the afternoon in the Cathedral of Saint John the Baptist in Paterson. Every parish will be represented with a banner and official contingent entering into the cathedral to commemorate the JUBILEE YEAR OF HOPE proclaimed by our Holy Father Pope Francis. All are welcome to attend. Free indoor parking at the garage located adjacent to the cathedral on Grand Street.

### Men’s Cornerstone XXV Retreat

Friday, January 31 and Saturday, February 1, 2025  
Notre Dame of Mount Carmel Church, 75 Ridgedale Avenue, Cedar Knolls, NJ

#### Come Holy Spirit, Come...

*“Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.” Acts 2:2-4*  
Join us for 24 hours of Sharing, Prayer 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.

**Dates:** January 31 and February 1, 2025 (starts 5:30pm Friday evening and culminates at the Saturday 5pm Mass)

**Location:** Notre Dame of Mt. Carmel Church, 75 Ridgedale Avenue, Cedar Knolls, NJ **Registration online:** <https://ndcarmel.com> or contact our retreat leaders: Joe Casano: [joe.casano13@gmail.com](mailto:joe.casano13@gmail.com), ndmc.mens.cornerstone@gmail.com, (908) 403-4699 Tom Lord: [tmlord@gmail.com](mailto:tmlord@gmail.com), (973) 722-1889

**ADVENT TREE AND BABY BASSINETTE** – As in past years we will once again try to provide some “Christmas cheer” for those who are in need. You are invited to take a tag from the ADVENT TREE located at the altar of Saint Joseph to benefit those being served by Catholic Charities in Paterson. ALSO, “baby needs” are being requested for Birth Haven: baby clothes size preemie to 9 months, womens underwear size small to xxl, womens pjs and robes size medium-xxl, body wash, body lotion, shampoo, conditioner, Shoprite gift cards, boppy pillows which may be placed in the bassinette located at the altar of the Blessed Virgin Mary. (Please do not bring diapers!) All donations must be brought to church no later than December 15<sup>th</sup>. May the Lord bless you for your generosity to those in need!

**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.

**ANNIVERSARY LOGO** – I am very grateful to Lori Lagitch for creating a variety of designs which will be used throughout the year to celebrate our parish’s 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. The banner on the front exterior of the church is one example of her talent. God bless you, Lori! – Father Zig

**NEW MUSIC MINISTER** – I welcome NIK BROWN as our new music minister at Saint Cecilia Church. In addition to his wonderful voice, he is proficient in playing the organ and piano. I pray that he will be with us for many years leading us in our musical praise to God. – Father Zig

#### 2024 SIMBANG GABI

The first night of the traditional Filipino novena Masses before Christmas will take place at **Sacred Heart of Jesus Church** on **Sunday, December 15, at 6:00 PM**. Rev. Fr. Vic Karljohn Leviste will be the principal celebrant. Fellowship and Filipino refreshments will follow the Mass.

#### **PASKO: Misang Pinoy (Filipino Christmas Mass)**

The **Filipino Christmas Day Mass** will be celebrated on **Wednesday, December 25, at 12:00 PM** by Rev. Fr. Cerilo Javinez. This is a **Holy Day of Obligation**.

These traditional Filipino Masses are sponsored by the **Diocesan Commission for Catholic Ministries (DCCFM) of Paterson**. For more information or to volunteer, please contact **DCCFM President, Elmer Maximo** at (973) 664-1949.

**Maraming salamat po!**

**Christmas Trees**—St. Paul’s Abbey, on 289 Route 206, Newton, NJ 07860 (one mile south of Newton), has thousands of Christmas trees ready to choose “n” cut. Open Thursday to Sunday from November 23rd to December 15th, 10:00 am to 3:30 pm (Close—Thanksgiving—11.28.24). The Abbey Gift Shop will be open with many items for Christmas gifts, including books, statues, jewelry, and more.

**2024 Diocesan Ministries Appeal “United In Faith, Hope, Love”** – As the end of 2024 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 profound need. Your gift is a true blessing to both the contributor and the recipient. Please make the Diocesan Ministries Appeal a priority in your year-end philanthropy. Gifts can be made by check, through gifts of securities, credit card or online. May God bless you for your support! Please consider a donation to the 2024 Diocesan Ministries Appeal. Visit [www.2024appeal.org](http://www.2024appeal.org) to make an online gift today.

**THANK YOU** – Our thanks to the Kanapaux Funeral Home for providing us with the 2025 Home Liturgical Calendar. Copies of the calendar are located in the church vestibule.

**CONCERT** – A Christmas concert will take place in our church on Sunday evening, December 15<sup>th</sup> at 7 o’clock. The hour long program will consist of presentations by our parish choir, the Vietnamese Community choir of our parish and concluding with congregational singing. Please join us in this musical program.

**ADVENT PENANCE SERVICE** – An opportunity for all to go to confession prior to Christmas will take place on Monday evening, December 16<sup>th</sup> beginning at 7 o’clock. Eight priests will be present to celebrate the sacrament of penance for both adults and young people. Let us all avail ourselves to this time so as to prepare our hearts to receive the Lord at Christmas most worthily.

**OPLATEK** – This bread for the traditional (Eastern European) Christmas Eve supper is available at the altar of Saint Joseph. Your donation is greatly appreciated and may be placed in the basket.

**ECUMENICAL ADVENT SERVICE** – The 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Rockaway Ecumenical Progressive Advent Service will take place on Friday evening, December 20<sup>th</sup> at 6 o’clock at Teabo United Methodist Church (47 Teabo Rd. Wharton). The Next stop will be the First Presbyterian Church (Church St.) and the final stop at the Rockaway United Methodist Church (Hoagland Ave.). The service will conclude there with cookies and hot cocoa. All are welcome!



My dear parishioners,

Today we commemorate the Third Sunday in Advent known as “Gaudete Sunday.” The Ordo gives the following information regarding this Sunday: *Gaudete Sunday, so called from the first word of the antiphon at the Introit of the Mass. Gaudete (Rejoice), taken from the Latin translation of Philippians 4:4-5, sets the tone of joyful expectation of the Lord’s birth and Second Coming, as does the permitted use of rose-colored vestments.* The words “joy” and “rejoice” have a significant presence in the Scripture readings for today, as well as the Responsorial Psalm. God is near! Joy and gladness must fill our hearts as we anticipate meeting the Savior of our souls. This meeting does not catch us unawares but prepared to meet Him with righteous deeds.

In the Gospel reading for this Sunday we are introduced to the Baptist and Forerunner John who is asked by a variety of people, **WHAT SHOULD WE DO?** The response is the same, **LIVE HONORABLE AND VIRTUOUS LIVES.** The manner in which we conduct ourselves indicates our preparedness to meet the Lord. When He comes to us we will greet Him with the righteous deeds which originate in love as a result of our faith in the One whose coming is awaited in hope.

The Christmas season finds most people more pleasant, generous and cheerful than any other time of the year. Many times when Christmas has come to a close so too does the kindness. The Gospel for today reminds us that the virtuous and honorable life is to be lived every day. This is the manner in which we conduct ourselves “as we wait in joyful hope for the coming of our Savior Jesus Christ.” We also learn from John the Baptist about the virtue of **HUMILITY.** John demonstrates for us the manner in which we are to serve Our Lord and one another, with selflessness and sacrifice. Conducting ourselves in this way leads to true joy and gladness.

Miserable are those whose lives are centered on themselves with no concern for the other. A pall of darkness and sadness falls upon them as they move through life devoid of joy. We are reminded of the generous spirit which facilitates good works bringing with it a joy that is life-giving. A humble heart provides the love which can help change the world. This is the transformation that John the Baptist preached as he called people to baptism for the remission of their sins.

**WHAT SHOULD WE DO?** Let’s live honorably and virtuously every day!

**COME LORD JESUS!**

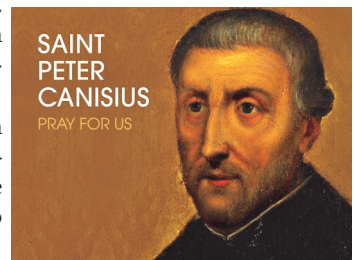
*Father Zig*

**ST. PETER CANISIUS, Priest and Doctor of the Church**  
**December 21**

THIS eminent Jesuit was born in Nijmegen, Holland (when it was part of Germany), May 8, 1521. At twenty-two years of age he joined the Society of Jesus and distinguished himself in studies and spiritual perfection. He was the second great Apostle of Germany, preacher, theologian, and leader of the Counter Reformation.

With astonishing clarity this devout man of God saw that in order to combat the Reformation the Church must first reform herself in her pastors and prepare generations of instructed laymen capable of defending their Faith. Of the many works which flowed from his pen, the most celebrated remains a Catechism which appeared in 1560 and went on to achieve two hundred editions before the turn of the century.

He died at Fribourg, Switzerland in 1597. Pope Pius XI canonized him on May 21, 1925, and proclaimed him a Doctor of the Church.



**PRAYER** God, You endowed Your Priest, St. Peter Canisius, with holiness and learning for the defense of the Church. Through his intercession, grant that those who seek the truth may joyfully find You and that the people of believers may ever persevere in bearing witness to You. Amen.

# *Saint Cecilia Parish*

*90 Church Street  
Rockaway, New Jersey 07866*

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To Contact: Fr. Zig: Ext. 12 or [speplowski@optonline.net](mailto:speplowski@optonline.net)  
Fr. Matt: Ext 15 or [frmateuszdarlak@gmail.com](mailto:frmateuszdarlak@gmail.com)  
School: 973-627-6003    CCD Office: 973-627-0313 Ext. 17

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