

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
YOUTH PROTECTION &
SAFE ENVIRONMENT
COORDINATOR

Mr. James Clancy
DIRECTOR OF FAITH FORMATION

Mr. Charles Linnell
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 or by email.

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

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, September 15, Our Lady of Sorrows

6:30 am — Kristen Darlak req. by Fr. Matt

8:00 am — Scott J. Sirvent req. by the Bozza Family

Tuesday, September 16, Saints Cornelius, Pope, and Cyprian, Bishop, Martyrs

6:30 am — Special Intention

8:00 am — Martha Salvesen req. by MaryLou & John Rodimer

Wednesday, September 17, Saint Robert Bellamine, Bishop and Doctor of the Church, Saint Hildegard of Bingen, Virigin and Doctor of the Church

6:30 am — Augustyn Bizon req. by Family

8:00 am — For the Holy Souls in Purgatory

Thursday, September 18, Weekday

6:30 am — Rey Duma req. by the Clancy Family

8:00 am — Russell Colditz req. by his wife, Ana

Friday, September 19, Saint Januarius, Bishop and Martyr

6:30 am — Joseph Lopez req. by the Clancy Family

8:00 am — Jerald Seck req. by DMA Faculty, Staff & Students

Saturday, September 20, Saints Andrew Kim Tae-gon, Priest, and Paul Chong Ha-sang, and Companions, Martyrs

8:00 am — Martha Salvesen req. by St. Cecilia Parish

Sunday, September 21, Twenty-Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

4:30 pm — Sarah Lombardo req. by Kathleen & Ronald

Kosiakowski

Marlene & Donald Smerklo req. by the Walter Family

7:00 pm — Jeanne Gallagher req. by her daughter, Jan

Eugene Bozza req. by the Bozza Family

8:00 am — For the Parishioners of St. Cecilia Church

9:15 am — Bill Frankle req. by the Cullen Family

10:45 am — Renato Sebastian & Antonita DeJesus req. by Family

12:15 pm — For the sick listed in our bulletin and their caregivers

ST. CECILIA CHURCH COLLECTION GOALS**Week Ending : September 7, 2025**

Collection—Checks & Cash	\$ 12,805.00
WeShare Electronic Giving	\$ 5,889.13
Total Weekly Collection	\$ 18,694.13

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

Weekly Collection Surplus (Deficit)	\$ 4,380.40
Year To Date Surplus (Deficit)	\$ 5,099.70

Our Condolences to the Family of
Anne Terminello
 Eternal Rest Grant to her Lord

BLESSING OF PETS—The annual blessing of pets in commemoration of the Feast of Saint Francis of Assisi will take place on Saturday, October 4th beginning at 12 noon. The ceremony will take place on the churchyard of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish on East Main Street.

THE BLOOD PRESSURE MINISTRY—we are looking for nurses to help at the Saturday 4:30 PM Mass on the second Sunday once a month. If you can help, please call through the Rectory Office at 973-627-0313 and leave your name and cell phone number. We would be most grateful. Thank you!

PRAY FOR THE SICK AND THEIR CAREGIVERS

Ethan Chandra, Dean Wayne Campbell, 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, Frieda Solow, Claire Wasacz, Emilio Viola, Ramiro Hinojosa, Jimmy Buckley, Clare Desmond, Craig Huffman, George Stitik, Stephen Goordman, Cecilia Donofrio, Deidra Zink, Anthony Pane, Victoria Zuber, Keith Newman, Francis Sanchez, Raymond Fullam, John Sandelli, 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, Katherine Lynn, Sophie Boylan, Michael Gatzke, Philip Colombrito, Esperanza Vertucci, Molly Mack, Michele Murray, Jimmy Olge-luie, Mark Howarth, Logan Mattessich, Harry Lusardi, Carmela Cragan, Bob Libak, Mary Lou Baumiller, Patricia Shea, Jose Castillo, Joseph Bardi, Gloria Benson, William Serafin, Eleanor Sala.



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, PVT Jack L. Gatzke, US Army, ENS Timothy G. Smith, US Navy, 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

ADULT FAITH FORMATION BEGINS – We have a variety of opportunities here at Saint Cecilia for adults to gather and learn about and share their faith.

Monday Evening Bible Study meets every week in Hayes Hall beginning at 7:30 starting September 15th. The course of study is entitled, “Foundation of Faith: A Journey Through the Catechism of the Catholic Church.” In 20 sessions you will be familiar with the catechism which contains the faith of the Church.

Tuesday Morning Bible Study meets every week in Hayes Hall beginning at 9:30 starting October 14th. Father Matt will lead the class in exploring the Letters of Saint John as well as the Book of Revelation.

“Saint Cecilia Presents” is a monthly gathering on a Thursday evening beginning at 7 o’clock in Hayes Hall with a presentation by a guest speaker. The line-up is: September 25 – Bishop Arthur Serratelli will speak on the Nicene Creed and about his newly published book which will be available for sale that evening. On October 16 Father Michael Parisi will give a talk on the Military Archdiocese and Pastoral Care to the Members of the Armed Forces. On November 13 Mr. Preston Dibble will speak to us on the topic of Sacred Music and Saint Cecilia. We conclude in December on the 11th with “Open Mike Night”.

Advent Retreat will take place on Saturday morning, December 6th with Monsignor Raymond Kupke as the presenter for this morning of reflection which will begin with Holy Mass at 8 o’clock and breakfast. (additional information will be forthcoming)

This will serve as the fall line-up of faith formation opportunities for adults.

SOCIETY MEETINGS – Both the Men’s Society and the Saint Monica Guild will conduct their meetings on Saturday, September 20th in Hayes Hall immediately following the 8 o’clock morning Mass. All members and new members are invited to attend!

POST CANA DATE NIGHTS – All couples, married either 50 days or 50 years, are invited to attend a gathering of couples on Saturday, September 27th at 8 o’clock in the evening. The event begins in the church for a brief prayer and video presentation. Couples then have time alone to talk and share their insights. The evening concludes in Hayes Hall with food, drink and fellowship. What a blessing for a happier and holier marriage!

EATING TO SUPPORT – The Knights of Columbus Council 514 will hold a fund raising breakfast at APPLEBEE’S on Route 46 E, Dover on Saturday, October 11th from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. Tickets are \$15 and will be sold after Masses on Saturday and Sunday, October 4 and 5. Please see the information posted on the bulletin board in the church vestibule for additional information. Let’s support our knights who do such great work for the Church!

JUBILEE YEAR OF HOPE – His Excellency Bishop Sweeney has designated SAINT BERNARD CHURCH (22 St. Bernards Drive in Mount Hope) as a designated pilgrim site for the Diocese of Paterson. Pilgrims are welcome on Monday evenings for Holy Mass at 6:30, followed by Holy Hour and Confessions. A plenary indulgence is granted to pilgrims. Our Holy Father, Pope Leo, calls all Christians to become pilgrims of hope. This is a virtue which must be sourced above all in the grace of God and in the fullness of His mercy. A plenary indulgence is given to those who are: *truly repentant; free from any affection for sin; moved by a spirit of charity; receive the sacraments of Penance and Eucharist; and pray for the intentions of Pope Francis (I Our Father, I Hail Mary and I Glory be...)*. A plenary indulgence is the full remission of the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been forgiven. This jubilee grace can be applied in suffrage to the souls in Purgatory through pilgrimage, whose works of mercy and penance, and visits to a Jubilee designated shrine or church, such as Saint Bernard’s.

OCIA

OCIA BEGINS SOON—Have you been worshipping with us, but have never officially taken the step to become Catholic? Are you seeking a relationship with Jesus, but have not been Baptized or Confirmed or have not received First Communion? Are you married to a Catholic, but just don’t know the next step to become Catholic? Sister Diane will be in the front of the Church after most of the Masses to answer your questions about how to prepare for these sacraments. The first introductory session is September 28, after the 10:45 Mass in the parish office. Contact Sister Diane: sdmoughan@gmail.com

Registration for Religious Education classes for the 2025- 2026 is open on our web-site.

PRO LIFE COMMUNITY EDUCATION EVENING – “*Death With Dignity: The Catholic Version*” is the topic for the Tenth Biennial Pro-Life Community Education Evening sponsored by the John Paul II Respect Life Ministry. The event will take place on Friday evening, October 17th from 7 to 9 o’clock in Hayes Hall. The speaker will be Father Pawel Tomczyk, Director of Pastoral Formation and Assistant professor of Moral Theology at Immaculate Conception Seminary School of Theology at Seton Hall University. Admission is free, refreshments will be served.

Monday, September 15

7:00 pm—Holy Hour (Church)

7:30 pm—Bible Study (Hayes Hall)

Tuesday, September 16

12:00 pm—Seniors Meeting (Hayes Hall)

7:00 pm—Back to School Night for DMA (HH & School)

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

Wednesday, September 17

8:30 am—Soup Kitchen (Hayes Hall)

7:00 pm—Pro-Life Meeting (Hayes Hall)

7:00 pm—Choir Practice (Church)

Thursday, September 18**Friday, September 19**

8:30 am—DMA Retreat (Hayes Hall)

Saturday, September 20

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

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

Sunday, September 21

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

8:00 pm—LTP (Hayes Hall)

BUY YOUR TICKETS TODAY! – Today we are selling tickets to our parish's 150th Anniversary Gala Banquet which will take place on Saturday, November 22 beginning at 6 o'clock in the evening at the Hanover Manor in East Hanover. The ticket cost for this *FORMAL EVENT* is \$70 for adult, \$50 for senior and \$30 for children. Reservation forms for table seating for 10 are located at the sales table. **ALSO**, tickets for the Grand 50/50 Raffle, which will be drawn on November 22nd, are also available for sale. The cost per ticket is \$20.

ANNIVERSARY JOURNAL AD – An information sheet regarding the placement of an ad in our parish's 150th ANNIVERSARY JOURNAL is located on the bulletin table located in the church vestibule. Should your family or business like to be included in this commemorative publication, please complete the form and return it to the parish office as soon as possible. Also, if there is a business or professional group which you are familiar with, I would ask that you present our request for an ad. I truly appreciate your support in this project which will be a source of parish pride and become a historical document for future years.

A "PATRONS SECTION" will appear in the 150th Anniversary Journal. This section will contain the names of those who would like to support this publication. The donation is \$50 and must be accompanied with the form which can be found at the "sales table" located in the church vestibule on Sunday or by going to the parish office during the week at business hours. Let's get every family's name in this historic publication.—Fr. Zig

Divine Mercy Academy News

Enrollment for the 2025-2026 school year at Divine Mercy Academy in Rockaway is underway!

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 extra-curricular 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.

Registration is now open for the 50th Annual Pumpkin Classic Golf Outing

hosted by the Knights of Columbus, Our Lady of the Lakes Council #3359, to benefit Divine Mercy Academy in Rockaway, NJ. Join us on Friday, October 10, 2025, at Rock Ridge Golf Course in Hackettstown for a day of golf, fellowship, and community spirit. The \$175 golfer package includes breakfast, golf with cart, on-course refreshments, commemorative gifts, and buffet dinner. Dinner-only tickets are \$50. Registration opens at 7:45 a.m., golf begins at 9:00 a.m., and dinner with awards and raffles follows at 2:00 p.m. Sponsorships are available starting at \$100. Proceeds support the students of Divine Mercy Academy—come play, sponsor, or dine and be part of this 50th anniversary tradition! To register go to www.kofc3359.org

Stay Connected with Us Online! Want to keep up with the latest events, uplifting messages, and community updates from our parish? Follow us on our official social media channels! Facebook | Instagram | TikTok: @SaintCeciliaChurch You can follow Fr. Matt on his YouTube channel for heartfelt weekly reflections podcast - <https://youtube.com/frmattdarlak>

Like, follow, and share to help us spread faith, joy, and love beyond the church walls.

Let's grow in faith together — online and offline!

FILIPINO SAINTS CELEBRATION: The Diocesan Commission for Catholic Filipino Ministries (DCCFM) invites you to the annual celebration honoring our two Filipino saints: San Lorenzo Ruiz and San Pedro Calungsod, on September 20, 2025 (Saturday). The celebration's highlight will be a Mass presided over by Bishop Kevin J. Sweeney at 11:30 AM at Saint Philip the Apostle Parish, 797 Valley Road, Clifton, NJ 07013. Please contact DCCFM President **Elmer Maximo** at (973)664-1949 or email DCCFM at dccfmevents@gmail.com for more information. Thank you.

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

GOLD and SILVER WEDDING ANNIVERSARY MASS
Couples, were you married in 2000, 1975 or 1965? The Diocese of Paterson invites you to celebrate your 60th, 50th or 25th wedding anniversary during a special Mass to be offered at the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist in Paterson, NJ. Bishop Sweeney will serve as main celebrant on this joyful occasion to be held: **Sunday, November 16, 2025 at 3:00pm**. Arrangements can be made by contacting your parish office. **The deadline to register is Friday, October 17, 2025**. You will receive additional information from the Office of Family Life once your registration has been processed. *Congratulations on this joyous occasion!*

FAMILY FUN DAY – The Sisters of Christian Charity are inviting all families with children to their Motherhouse in Mendham on Saturday, September 20th from 11 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Come for a day of games and activities with the Sisters of Christian Charity. The donation is \$20 per child, adults and children under 3 are free. Proceeds of the event will go to support the education of the Sisters in formation. There will be activities and prizes, face painting, bounce-house, picnicking, field games and more. The Motherhouse is located at 350 Bernardsville Road in Mendham. Let's support this great event!!!

NEW JERSEY MARCH FOR LIFE – Join pro-life advocates from around New Jersey to peacefully rally and march in Trenton for the dignity of the human person. The event begins with Holy Mass in the Cathedral of Saint Mary of the Assumption (Trenton) at 9:30 a.m.; the Rally at 11 a.m.; March to the Statehouse at 12 Noon. Bus transportation is available at \$35 per person for registration please go to: www.insidethewalls.org.

ROSARY PROJECT – October is known as the Month of the Holy Rosary, and it was the last month in 1917 (13th) that the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to the Three Children at Fatima asking them to spread the devotion of the Holy Rosary for the cause of peace in the world. In obedience to Our Lady's request, we will begin *the HOME ROSARY PROJECT* sponsored by the Knights of Columbus. Each Sunday a family will be given the opportunity to take home the statue of Our Lady of Fatima, which comes from and was blessed in Fatima, for one week to pray the Rosary as a family every day. The statue may be taken on Sunday after the 12:15 pm Mass. The statue must be returned to the church no later than the conclusion of the 12:15 Sunday Mass. The statue and sign-up sheet will be located at the altar of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

DIOCESAN MINISTRIES APPEAL – The annual *DIOCESAN MINISTRIES APPEAL* (formally known as the Bishop's Annual Appeal) will begin on Saturday and Sunday, September 20-21. I am happy that Eric Schenck has agreed to serve as this year's lay chairman for the appeal. His presentation will be given at all Masses to inaugurate our parish participation in this very important part of our diocesan life. – Father Zig

PADRE PIO MEETING – The Saint Padre Pio Prayer Meeting will take place on Wednesday morning, October 1st beginning at 10 o'clock in the votive chapel located off the church vestibule. In the hour long gathering the Holy Rosary is prayed and the monthly prayer group reflection sent from Italy is discussed. All are welcome to join us in this prayerful time centered on the spirituality of Padre Pio.

LITTLE FLOWER CELEBRATION – Saint Catherine of Siena Parish in Mountain Lakes (10 North Pocono Road) will sponsor a celebration in honor of the feast of Saint Theresa of the Child Jesus on Sunday, September 21st at 2 o'clock in the afternoon. His Excellency, Bishop Kevin Sweeney will preside at the service which will include bagpipers, a Broadway singer and a Knights of Columbus representation. For further information please call Carol Bsarany at 973.271.9252.

**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:**





My dear parishioners,

This Sunday we leave “Ordinary Time” to celebrate the Feast of the Triumph of the Cross, also known by an earlier title, the Elevation of the Holy, Precious and Life-Giving Cross. This feast is one of the great 14 holy days observed by both the Eastern Church and the Western Church on September 14th. When this feast falls on a Sunday, as it does this year, it replaces the Sunday in Ordinary Time.

Today we commemorate the day when the Dowager Empress Helen found the True Cross which Our Lord was crucified in Jerusalem in the year 330. Saint Helen was the first recorded pilgrim to have traveled to the Holy Land in search of the sites associated with the Lord Jesus. With the assistance of the local Christian community who had kept the memory of the holy places alive, Saint Helen built churches at the places where the Lord Jesus’ birth, death and Resurrection had occurred.

According to tradition the sweet basil herb marked the location where the crosses of Calvary had been buried for centuries. When the excavation was completed and three crosses were found a sick person was brought to the scene and was immediately cured when the True Cross was brought before the person. In the Eastern Churches, both Catholic and Orthodox, basil surrounds the cross in the church for this feast day as a reminder of this story.

Today’s feast also commemorates the consecration of the Basilica of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem which was built to house both Calvary and the Tomb of the Resurrection. This church has been destroyed and rebuilt throughout the centuries but still stands today as rebuilt by the Crusaders in the 13 Century.

Although this feast recalls history and tradition it is also very rich in theological significance. The CROSS is the symbol of our Christian faith and the sign of our salvation which was won for us by the Lord Jesus in His suffering and death. The Cross is a sign of victory over the forces of evil and the emblem from which the devil flees. The Cross is the pledge of God’s love for us and the sign that identifies the followers of the Risen Christ.

Today we bless the sign of the Cross and show our reverence for it as we would at the Liturgy for Good Friday. You may want to come forward to kiss or touch the Cross displayed in the church, as you would on Good Friday, before you leave church today.

WE ADORE YOU, O CHRIST, AND WE BLESS YOU, BECAUSE BY YOUR HOLY CROSS YOU HAVE REDEEMED THE WORLD!

Fr. Zig

ST. JOSEPH OF CUPERTINO, Priest
September 18-Patron of Aviators

ST. JOSEPH was born at Cupertino, in the Diocese of Nardo in the Kingdom of Naples, in 1603. After spending his childhood and adolescence in simplicity and innocence, he finally joined the Franciscan Friars Minor Conventual. After his ordination to the holy priesthood he gave himself up entirely to a life of humiliation, mortification, and obedience. He was most devoted to the Blessed Virgin Mary and promoted devotion to her among all classes of people.

It is said that the life of this Saint was marked by ecstasies and levitations. The mere mention of God or a spiritual matter was enough to take him out of his senses; at Mass he frequently floated in the air in rapture. Once as Christmas carols were being sung he soared to the high altar and knelt in the air, rapt in prayer.

The people flocked to him in droves seeking help and advice in the confessional, and he converted many to a truly Christian life. However, this humble man had to endure many severe trials and terrible temptations throughout his life. He died on September 18, 1663, and was canonized in 1767 by Pope Clement XII.

PRAYER God, You willed that Your only-begotten Son should draw all things to Himself when He was lifted up above the earth. May the merits and example of St. Joseph, Your Priest, help us to rise above all earthly desires so that we may come to Jesus. Amen.

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

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