

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, October 6, Saint Bruno, Priest

6:30 am — Diane Ryan req. by Lisa & Roger Mierop

8:00 am — Zbigniew Bogdanowicz

Tuesday, October 7, Our Lady of the Rosary

6:30 am — Elizabeth Skwara req. by her husband, Jan

8:00 am — Albert Green req. by the McDonnell Family

Wednesday, October 8, Weekday

6:30 am — Nels & Martha Salvesen req. by their daughters

8:00 am — Steven Jozwiak req. by Edward Jozwiak

Thursday, October 9, Saint Denis, Bishop and Companions,**Martyrs; Saint John Leonardi, Priest**

6:30 am — Deceased Members of the Will Family

8:00 am — Anne Terminello req. by Pat Degnan

Friday, October 10, Weekday

6:30 am — Special Intention

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

Saturday, October 11, Saint John XXIII, Pope, BVM

8:00 am — James P. Donohue req. by Edward Jozwiak

Sunday, October 12, Twenty-Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time

4:30 pm — Russell Colditz req. by his wife, Ana

Martha Salvesen req. by bob Nielson

7:00 pm — Fred Lombardo req. by Elaine & Tom

Al Cuneo req. by Ag Struble

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

9:15 am — Rosemary & Martin Matis req. by Rosemary Matis

10:45 am — Mario Zambrano req. by Family

Anne Zando req. by Marie & Ted Wahlstrom

12:15 pm — Maciej Kulig req. by Parents & Brother

Ellen M. Werner req. by Arlene Daggett & Family

ST. CECILIA CHURCH COLLECTION GOALS**Week Ending : September 28, 2025**

Collection—Checks & Cash	\$ 8,918.00
WeShare Electronic Giving	\$ 5,889.13
Total Weekly Collection	\$ 14,807.13

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

Weekly Collection Surplus (Deficit)	\$ 493.40
Year To Date Surplus (Deficit)	\$ 5,326.37

We are thankful for your consistent stewardship. ©JPPC



*The Sanctuary Candle burning on our altar
is in loving memory of
Russell Colditz
Requested by his wife, Ana*

WORLD MISSION SUNDAY — Bishop Sweeney is inviting you to join with him in the observance of World Mission Sunday by attending the 12 Noon Mass at Saint James of the Marches Church in Totowa on Sunday, October 19th. Let us remember the Church's mission of evangelization as we join in prayer with Catholics throughout the world on this day.

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 Cummiskey, 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, Cecilia Pane.



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.

WINTER COAT DRIVE – The Men’s Society will sponsor their annual Saint Martin of Tours Coat Drive on Saturday and Sunday, November 1 and 2. New (or gently clean used coats) may be placed on the designated tables in Hayes Hall. Coats are being accepted for men, women and children and will be distributed to the needy through the Morristown Mission and the Father English Community Center in Paterson. Saint Martin of Tours is known for the act of sharing his cloak with a beggar who turned out to be Christ. His feast day is November 11th.

DINNER WITH THE BISHOP – Bishop Sweeney is inviting high school, college age and older men to join him for dinner on Friday evening, October 17th at Saint Philip the Apostle Church in Clifton (797 Valley Road) from 6:30 to 8:30. This event is called “Project Andrew” and is an invitation to those who may be considering the priesthood. During this time prayer will take place along with a vocation talk given by one of the seminarians of the diocese. This is a great opportunity to ask questions about the life of a priest and to meet other young men trying to discover God’s call in their lives. The event is free of charge, but registration is requested by contacting Father Charlie Lana at 973.777.8818x711 or vocations@patersondiocese.org.

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 (1 Our Father, 1 Hail Mary and 1 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 BRING A FRIEND Come and see! Ask your questions before you decide that you don’t have time! Join the group for adults to take the first step in becoming Catholic or receiving Baptism, Confirmation or First Eucharist at Easter. Come and see for yourself how flexible our adult-centered process makes the journey to a deeper living of your faith. Meetings are beginning in the Parish Office after the 10:45 Mass. to 12:35 pm, Oct. 5 - Living Baptism and your Questions Oct. 12 No meeting Oct. 19 - Following Jesus (Scripture at Mass) Contact Sister Diane at sdmoughan@gmail.com.

ROSARY DAY – Tuesday, October 7th is the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary. Join us in the church at 6:30 in the evening as we pray the Holy Rosary on this Marian Feast Day.

CARNIVAL RECAP MEETING – A meeting to share information and good practices regarding the recent parish carnival will take place on Tuesday evening, October 7th in Hayes Hall beginning at 7 o’clock. The meeting is open to all those who served on the carnival committee and the volunteers who worked at the event.

ROSYGLO 50/50 RAFFLES – Rosyglo Foundation, which was founded in memory of Sister Thomasine Smith (who resided in St. Cecilia Parish convent for many years) will conduct their annual raffle to benefit the retired Nuns at the Sisters of Christian Charity (our religious order of Sisters) and our own **Divine Mercy Academy** towards scholarships. Raffles will be sold at all masses this weekend, October 18th – 19th. We hope you will support this important fund raiser for this most worthwhile cause. Tickets cost \$5 each. Your generosity will do good works in memory of a devoted religious sister. Thank you very much for your support.

BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENING will take place at the 4:30 pm Mass on October 11th and after all the Masses on October 12th.

Monday, October 6

7:00 pm—Holy Hour (Church)

7:30 pm—Bible Study (Hayes Hall)

Tuesday, October 7

12:00 pm—Seniors (Hayes Hall)

7:00 pm—Carnival Recap Meeting (Hayes Hall)

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

Wednesday, October 8

8:00 am—DMA 8th Grade Retreat (Church & Hayes Hall)

7:00 pm—Protecting God's Children Workshop (HH)

7:00 pm—Choir Practice (Church)

Thursday, October 9**Friday, October 10****Saturday, October 11**

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

Sunday, October 12

9:15 am—Children's Liturgy (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.

Final Day for Registration:

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**Help Wanted—Substitute Teachers**

Divine Mercy Academy is seeking substitute teachers for the 2025-2026 school year! If you are interested, please call the school at 973-627-6003.

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

IF YOU ATTEND FRIDAY MORNING MASS— As a security measure the doors of the church will be locked for Friday morning Mass at 7:50 am. If you attend Mass on Friday morning, you must be in the building by that time. This is a security measure for our school children.— Fr. Zig

Grandfriends in Faith—Ms. Starks and her new third grade students would like to extend a warm invitation to senior parishioners to join this wonderful intergenerational program. The goal of this program is to promote love, unity, and warm fellowship between youth and senior adults. The third grade class and their Grandfriends will meet throughout the school year to form a lasting friendship, join creative forces in a craft or activity, and grow in faith together. Of course the meeting is never complete without delicious treats provided by the third grade parents. If you are interested in joining Grandfriends in Faith, please contact Mrs. Servidio at aservidio@dmrockaway.org

SENIOR NEWS—Our next Senior meeting is October 7th at 12 noon in Hayes Hall. We have a trip planned to see the Christmas Show at Hunterdon Hills Playhouse November 18th. Cost including the bus is \$105.00. Please contact Pat Degnan at pattyannmarie64@yahoo.com or (973) 627-1732.

Assumption College for Sisters, 200A Morris Ave. Denville, NJ, is in need of academic tutors. If interested, please contact Sister Teresa Bruno, Academic Dean, at

academicdean@acs350.org or call 973-957-0190 x100

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!*

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!

SACRED HEART ROSARY TEA – The Sacred Heart Women's Society is inviting the ladies of our parish to their annual "Rosary Tea" which will take place on Sunday afternoon, October 12th with praying the Rosary in Sacred Heart of Jesus Church at 1:30. The serving of tea and... will take place at the Riverside Shoppe, 26 East Main Street, following the church service. The cost is \$25, RSVP by October 5th, please call the rectory at 973.627.0422 OR Monica Profit at 973.983.9510.

We are online: www.st-cecilia.org

LOW GLUTEN – Those who cannot tolerate wheat products can receive the Holy Eucharist via a low gluten host which is approved by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops. Person(s) must make themselves identified to the priest no later than 10 minutes before Mass begins by going to the priest sacristy so that the preparation may be made for Mass.

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.

2025 Diocesan Ministries Appeal "Three Counties, One Family of Faith" "Three Counties, One Family of Faith" Thanks to the generosity of all who support the Diocesan Ministries Appeal, men, women and children throughout our Diocese are assisted. Last week, our bulletin listed some of the work in Sussex County that is supported with assistance from the Appeal. Below are ministries that your gift to the Diocesan Ministries helps support in Morris County. Group residences for adults with disabilities in Parsippany, Oak Ridge and Succasunna; Fix-It and Chore programs for low-income home-bound seniors and disabled veterans; Homelessness Prevention Program; Nazareth Village residence for diocesan senior priests, Chester; Mary's Hands family assistance center and ESL classes, Morristown; Services for veterans and their families; Assistance for people with HIV/AIDS; Food pantry, Dover; Gruenert Center Day Habilitation program for adults with disabilities, Lake Hopatcong; treatment services for individuals struggling with addiction; Catholic Religious Education for Adults with Disabilities, Oak Ridge. 27 Next week in our bulletin, the work of the Appeal in Passaic County will be highlighted. When you give to the Diocesan Ministries Appeal, your generosity is felt locally. You help your neighbor, your friend, perhaps a loved one. It's good to know that all gifts to the Diocesan Ministries Appeal are used only for the causes described in the Appeal materials and for no other purpose. Please consider a donation to the 2025 Diocesan Ministries Appeal. Visit www.2025appeal.org to make a gift today.

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,

Today is the 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time in our commemoration of the Lord's Day. As we gather to celebrate the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass we find the word **FAITH** present in the three Scriptural readings and which is the basis for our reflection today. The Catechism of the Catholic Church defines faith in the following: *"Faith is first of all a personal adherence of man to God. At the same time, and inseparably, it is a free ascent to the whole truth that God has revealed."* (#150) The truth has been revealed to us through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who says *"I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."* (John 14:6)

With the request of the Apostles to "Increase our faith" the Lord Jesus responds, "If you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you would say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you." Sounds like faith is pretty powerful and can accomplish extraordinary things. Of course, the Lord is using hyperbole to make a point so that we would not discount faith but see it for it truly is, potentially life-changing.

In the Old Testament reading the Prophet Habakkuk speaks of the just one, who because of his faith, shall live. The one who is faithless is surrounded by misfortune, destruction and chaos, these threaten and overwhelm him. These evils can bring despondency into human life causing darkness and extinction.

Encouraging words are found in the epistle reading from the Second Letter of the Apostle Paul to Timothy. Paul writes to his young confrere reminding him of the faith Timothy professed on the day of his baptism and ordination. Paul writes, *"Guard this rich trust with the help of the Holy Spirit that dwells within us"* This gift of faith allows the Holy Spirit to work within giving one the charisms to be faithful to the Gospel regardless of the challenges which are encountered. The Apostles words are words of faith which encourage followers of Christ to be strong, confident of the Lord's presence.

I encourage you to read the Letter to the Hebrews, chapter 11 which provides a wonderful reflection on the gift of faith and how this gift empowered our ancestors of faith to trust in the Lord. Their lives are a testimony of trust in the God who is the revealer of truth!

GLORY TO JESUS CHRIST – GLORY FOREVER!

Father Zig

ST. PELAGIA, Virgin and Martyr
October 8

Out of a maze of legendary tales connected with this name we can ascertain that the historical St. Pelagia was a devout Christian who lived in Antioch at the end of the 3rd century and the beginning of the 4th. About the year 305, when she was fifteen, the local persecutor of the Church learned of her Christian Faith and sent a group of soldiers to bring her to him for examination.

Despite her tender years, St. Pelagia was well aware of the outrages to which Christ's virgins were subjected in such cases. Therefore, when the soldiers reached her home, she declared that she had to put on her bravest apparel and excused herself from the room. Instead, she swiftly made her way to the roof of her house and flung herself headlong to the ground below in order to preserve her richest prize – the virginity she had vowed to Jesus.

The learned and saintly Doctors, St. Ambrose and St. John Chrysostom, both knew of her action and both concurred that it was a noble example of love of chastity. She is thus classified as a Virgin and Martyr by the Church.

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

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