

# 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

**Deacon Gerald Fadalla**  
DEACON

**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, February 16, Weekday**

6:30 am – Marge Benson

8:00 am – Isabel Blazejewski req. by Dianna & John Sullivan

**Tuesday, February 17, The Seven Holy Founders of the Servite Order**

6:30 am – In Honor of the Holy Face of Jesus req. by Ana Colditz

8:00 am – Clara Jozwiak

**Wednesday, February 18, Ash Wednesday**

6:30 am – For the Parishioners of St. Cecilia Church

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

4:30 pm – Liturgy of the Word

7:00 pm – For the Parishioners of St. Cecilia Church

**Thursday, February 19, Thursday after Ash Wednesday**

6:30 am – Elizabeth Michalowski req. by St. Monica Guild

8:00 am – Stephen Haran req. by Ed Jozwiak

**Friday, February 20, Friday after Ash Wednesday**

6:30 am – Liam Callahan

8:00 am – Anne & Henry Butow req. by nieces, Marcia & Laura

**Saturday, February 21, Saint Peter Damian, Bishop and Doctor of the Church**

8:00 am – Mary Reynolds

**Sunday, February 22, First Sunday of Lent**

4:30 pm – Elizabeth Molnar req. by Matthew J. Molnar, Jr, req. by Kenia Soto

Claudia Fontanella req. by Luttenberger Family

7:00 pm – Elizabeth Michalowski req. by Dianna & John Sullivan

8:00 am – George & Rose Ann Cunningham req. by Ed & Mary Merz

9:15 am – Special Intention for Fr. Zig, Fr. Matt and All Consecrated Children of God req. by Ana Colditz

10:45 am - Martha Sada Salvesen req. by Graner Family  
Joseph Haskins req. by Ed & Joanne Malone

12:15 pm – Cecilia Pane req. by Pane & Smith Families  
Margaret Starkes req. by Rosalie Marmara

**ST. CECILIA CHURCH COLLECTION GOALS**

Week Ending : February 8, 2026

Collection—Checks & Cash	\$ 9,371.56
WeShare Electronic Giving	\$ 6,484.38
<u>Total Weekly Collection</u>	\$ 15,855.94

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

<b>Weekly Collection Surplus (Deficit)</b>	\$ 1,542.21
<b>Year To Date Surplus (Deficit)</b>	\$ 40,403.40



*The Sanctuary Candle burning on our altar  
is in loving memory of  
**Arthur Johnson**  
Req. by his wife, Sally*

**JUBILEE CELEBRATION** – Our prayers and best wishes to Sister Diane who is celebrating her 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Consecrated Life as a Sister of Christian Charity. May the Lord God grant her many happy and healthy years in her service to Christ’s Church!

**WELCOME DEACON GERRY**—I would like to welcome to Saint Cecilia Parish Deacon Gerald Fadalla. Deacon Gerry has recently relocated to Rockaway from Hawthorne where he served at Saint Anthony Parish. Deacon Gerry will begin diaconal ministry in our parish for which I am most grateful. Fr. Zig

**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 Cragin, Bob Libak, Mary Lou Baumiller, Patricia Shea, Jose Castillo, Joseph Bardi, Gloria Benson, William Serafin, Eleanor Sala, Dennis McCoach, Gertrude Colditz, Ethel Sullivan.



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.**

**ADULT FAITH FORMATION** – Our parish offers two opportunities during the week for adults to gather to enrich their faith. On Monday evenings at 7:30 a video series on the Catechism of the Catholic Church takes place led by Chuck Malaniak. On Tuesday mornings at 9:30 a Scripture class on the Letters of Saint John and the Book of Revelation takes place led by Father Matt. Both gatherings are in Hayes Hall and are open to all adults. Please join us to increase your knowledge of the faith we share in Christ!

**RETIREMENT** – I put into print what I announced at all Masses on January 31/February 1, His Excellency Bishop Kevin Sweeney has granted my request for retirement effective July 1<sup>st</sup>. I will remain pastor until that time when our new pastor begins his duties. I will be living at Nazareth Village, the Residence for Retired Priests in the Diocese of Paterson located in Chester. I am most grateful to God and to you, my beloved parishioners, for the support and patience you have shown me over these 17 years. – Father Zig

*Father Peplowski (Fr. Zig) will be retiring in June after 51 years of priestly ministry and more than 22 years in service to our Diocese of Paterson, and more than 16 years as the Pastor of Saint Cecilia Parish. Our prayers go out to him as he prepares for this next phase of his long and fruitful priestly ministry.*

*Your feedback is an important component of the process of appointing the new Pastor of Saint Cecilia Parish. Please [click here](#) (on our web-site) or use the QR code to access the online feedback form. Responses will be collected through **February 21, 2026**.*

*If you have difficulty with the link, or would like assistance, please contact the Parish Office.*



**Church Regulations Regarding Fast and Abstinence:**

Abstinence from meat (beast or fowl) is to be observed by all Catholics fourteen years old and older on Ash Wednesday and on all the Fridays of Lent. This obligation prohibits the eating of meat, but not eggs, milk products, or condiments of any kind, even though made from animal fat.

Fasting means limiting oneself to one full meal on a given fast day. Catholics who are eighteen years of age but not yet fifty-nine are obliged to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. On fast days, two additional smaller meals are permitted if necessary to maintain strength. However, the two smaller meals together may not equal one full meal. Moreover, eating solid foods between meals on fast days is not permitted.



**Fish & Chips Dinner**

Catered by Thistles

Friday February 20, 2026

Pick-up or Eat-in from 5-7PM

Cafeteria in the Riverview School Annex (formerly St Mary's Prep) next to St Mary's Church, Denville

Adults \$22.00—Seniors \$19.00—Children \$15.00

Price includes soda, water, coffee, tea and dessert, BYOB



**KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS BENEFIT CONCERT**

"Lights Out Presents-The Jersey Beach Boys and more Tribute show!" The #1 Beach Boys Tribute show in the Nation! One night only, Saturday, March 28th at the St. Pius Parish Center, 24 Changebridge Road, Montville, NJ 07045. Doors open at 6:30 pm, show starts at 8:00 pm. Food, Gourmet Cakes & Refreshments are available including 50/50 and Tricky Trays!

General Admission (per person): \$45.00

VIP Limited Ticket (per person): \$75.00

**RETREAT WITH THE BISHOP** – Bishop Kevin Sweeney

will be holding a 3 day, 2 overnight discernment retreat for young men ages 16 and older, on the weekend of February 27 to March 1, at the Loyola Jesuit Retreat Center in Morristown. Bishop Sweeney will be the retreat mater for the weekend, which will include daily Mass, adoration, retreat talks and confession. Each attendee will have a private sleeping room, and all meals are included. There is no fee to attend, but registration is required. Visit: [patersonvocations.org](http://patersonvocations.org) to register or for more information call: 973.777.8818.

**PARISH LENTEN RETREAT** – Father James Platania

will serve as the presenter for this year's parish Lenten retreat which will take place on Saturday morning, March 7<sup>th</sup> beginning with the Holy Mass at 8 o'clock followed by a hot breakfast in Hayes Hall. The theme of the presentation is: *LET'S DO LENT: PRAYER, FASTING, ALMS-GIVING*. The retreat will conclude at 11:30 in the morning and the registration fee is \$25. Registration forms and check may be mailed/brought to the parish office. Father Platania is a professor of Sacred Scripture at Immaculate Conception Seminary at Seton Hall University.

**Monday, February 16***Divine Mercy Academy & Parish Office are closed***Tuesday, February 17***9:30 am—Bible Study (Hayes Hall)**12:00 pm—Seniors Meeting (Hayes Hall)**7:45 pm—Light of Christ Prayer Group (Church)***Wednesday, February 18***8:00 am—Soup Kitchen (Hayes Hall)***Thursday, February 19***8:30 am—Soup Kitchen (Hayes Hall)**7:00 pm—Bread & Soup (Church)***Friday, February 20***7:00 pm—Stations of the Cross (Church)***Saturday, February 21***8:30 am—St. Monica Guild Meeting (Hayes Hall)***Sunday, February 22***9:15 am—Liturgy of the Word**6:00 pm—True Love Waits (Divine Mercy Academy)*

**SHOPPING GIFT CARDS** – The sale of the shopping cards from SHOPRITE and other stores is conducted every Saturday and Sunday for the convenience of our parishioners. Your purchase of the cards assists our parish school, an important part of Saint Cecilia Parish. Please know that the cards may also be purchased at the parish office during the week. I would like to personally thank you for supporting this program! – Father Zig

**HOLY LENT TO BEGIN** – The season of Holy Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 18<sup>th</sup> as a day of strict fasting and abstinence from meat. The imposition of ashes will take place at the Holy Masses to be celebrated in the morning at 6:30 and 8 o'clock AND the evening Mass at 7 o'clock. A Liturgy of the Word service with the imposition of ashes will also take place at 4:30 in the afternoon. It is advised to use the parish parking lots when coming to church on Ash Wednesday rather than street parking.

**THURSDAY NIGHTS** – Every Thursday evening during Lent, beginning on February 19<sup>th</sup>, an adult faith formation program entitled “Bread and Soup” will take place in Hayes Hall beginning at 6:30. Following the serving of a simple supper of bread and soup a video presentation will take place with a short discussion afterwards. Join us for this time of “Lenten nourishment.”

**TRUE LOVE WAITS**—TEENS, do you know what God's plan is for love and relationships in your life? True Love Waits is a program, open to students from 7th grade through high school, that explores what God plans on how to have happy, fulfilling relationships with members of the opposite sex. Pre-registration is required and the program cost is \$20. Contact Jenny at 862-219-2028 or [jennyK24@outlook.com](mailto:jennyK24@outlook.com) to register or with any questions.

**Feb 15th, 22nd, and Mar. 1st from 6-9 pm (student sessions)**

**Divine Mercy Academy News**

In the world we live in today....It is a moment to pause, to breathe, and to recognize something sacred... the quiet, powerful work of Catholic education and the faith that sustains it.

Each year Catholic Schools Week invites us to reflect not just on a school, but on a belief. A belief that faith belongs at the center of a child's life. A belief that formation of the heart matters just as much as formation of the mind. A belief that when education is rooted in Christ, lives are changed in ways that last forever.

This work is not ordinary. It is not accidental. It is the result of prayer, trust, sacrifice, and hope... Hope placed in something greater than ourselves.

Choosing Catholic education is an act of faith. It is a statement that values matter, that truth matters, and that the future is worth investing in with intention and courage.

There is something deeply powerful about a community that believes in this mission. It is felt in the confidence of children, in the peace of families, and in the steady conviction that comes from knowing you are walking the right path... even when it requires sacrifice. The impact may not always be visible in the moment, but it is real, and it is lasting.

Catholic education shapes more than students... it strengthens families, builds communities, and creates foundations that endure far beyond classrooms and hallways. It forms young people who are prepared not only to succeed, but to stand firm in their faith, lead with integrity, and live.

Come see our phenomenal school at anytime! Our doors are always open, and we would be honored to welcome you for a personal tour. Witness firsthand the joy, energy, and love that fill our halls, and experience what makes this school such a special place for families and students alike. May God bless the work being done, the people who believe in it, and the future being shaped through it.

Help make this experience possible for children of all ages. Be the blessing in their life that gives them the experience of a lifetime... blessings, friendships, and experiences that will remain with them forever! Consider contributing to the St. Faustina Scholarship Fund for a faith-filled family to benefit from the treasure that is Divine Mercy Academy! God Bless!



**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

**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!

**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.

**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

**WE DID IT AGAIN!** – Yes, this year's parish response to the Diocesan Ministries Appeal (formally, The Bishop's Annual Appeal) was a tremendous success. Our parish goal was \$42,885 and we raised \$121,681 with 354 households participating. Last year we raised \$120,925 with 298 households participating. I am so proud of you for your generosity and support of the various agencies which will help others. May God bless you! – Father Zig

**PARISH MEN'S RETREAT** – A one night Lenten evening retreat for the men of our parish will take place on Friday, March 20<sup>th</sup> from 7 to 9 o'clock. The evening will include prayer, reflection, discussion and fellowship. There is no cost nor registration. We will begin by participating in the parish Stations of the Cross service at 7 o'clock in the church before moving to Hayes Hall. Additional information will be forthcoming.

**BREAD AND SOUP** – Every Thursday evening from February 19<sup>th</sup> to March 26<sup>th</sup> our annual Lenten program, "Bread and Soup" will take place in Hayes Hall from 6:30 to 8 o'clock. Following our simple supper of bread and soup we will view the video series entitled, "The Jewish Roots of Holy Week: The Last 7 Days." A small group discussion will take place followed by Night Prayer taken from the Liturgy of the Hours. The event is a faith formation program FOR ADULTS!

### **Assumption College for Sisters News**

Each year, Assumption College for Sisters hosts the *Caring Basket Gala*. The proceeds make it possible for the college to sponsor 20 Sisters from developing countries every year. As part of the fundraising, we sell 50/50 raffle tickets. These will be sold before and after Masses on the weekend of **March 7-8**. Your contributions make it possible for us to "Teach a Sister...Touch the World."

We invite you to join in our Gala on the evening of **Thursday, March 19** at the Sheraton Parsippany Hotel. This year we will be honoring Rev. Msgr. Raymond Kupke, James M. Porfido and Timothy and Nina Donohue.

**SAINT JOSEPH** – The Solemnity of Saint Joseph is Thursday, March 19<sup>th</sup>. We will begin the novena prayers on Tuesday, March 10 which will take place at the conclusion of the 8 o'clock morning Mass. In addition, this year we will conduct a HOLY HOUR on the vigil of the feast, Wednesday, March 18<sup>th</sup> at 7 o'clock in the evening. The celebration of the solemnity will conclude with the 8 o'clock morning Mass on Thursday, March 19<sup>th</sup> followed by the blessing of "Saint Joseph Pastries" which will be served in Hayes Hall following Holy Mass. A presentation on Saint Joseph will also take place in Hayes Hall. Please join us in honoring the one whom the Lord chose to head the Holy Family of Nazareth.

**PARISH CARNIVAL** – Plans are being made for this year's PARISH CARNIVAL which will take place in September. A planning meeting for all volunteers will take place on Tuesday evening, February 24<sup>th</sup> at 7 o'clock in Hayes Hall. All are welcome to help make this year's event a gigantic success! – Father Zig

**STATIONS OF THE CROSS** – The Lenten devotion of Stations of the Cross will be prayed every Friday in the church during the season of Lent following the 8 o'clock morning Mass AND in the evening at 7 o'clock.

### **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](http://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 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time as we gather to celebrate the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass on the Lord's Day. The word *CHOOSE* appears three times in the Old Testament reading from Sirach and becomes important as we read the Gospel in which the Lord Jesus speaks of the choices made regarding God's Law. Poor choices result in behavior unfitting a disciple. Rather, a disciple who pursues wisdom is the one whose choices in life assures him life on high in "*What eye has not seen, and ear has not heard, and what has not entered the human heart, what God has prepared for those who love him.*"

Today is the final Sunday in Ordinary Time until after the Easter Season when we will re-enter Ordinary Time on Monday, May 25<sup>th</sup> with the 8<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time. Yes, this week we begin the holy season of Lent on Ash Wednesday. This is a day of strict fast and abstinence, which means no eating meat, only one full meal is allowed with two smaller snacks. We are reminded that every Friday during Lent is a day of abstinence from meat and a day of penitential practice. This law does not apply to the elderly, small children or the sick. Parents have a special duty to talk to their children about Lent and encourage their participation in the penitential practices according to age.

I hope you will make a good choice to come to church on Wednesday with the entire family to welcome the holy season and to make a commitment to walk the journey of the upcoming Lenten days with faith. This choice can produce a life-altering experience with the Divine which leads to sheer joy.

Be on guard knowing that the devil will be active in tactics to deter you and your family from "doing Lent." Stay strong, make the choice to observe the holy season with prayer, fasting and alms-giving (works of charity). Mom and dad, be good models for your children during the Lenten days so that you may pass onto them the faith of the Church which recalls the suffering and death which our Savior endured for our salvation.

Recall the words from today's Old Testament reading: "Before man are life and death, good and evil, whichever he chooses shall be given him." Make the right choice, let's do Lent with faith and commitment – CHOOSE GOD!

GLORY TO JESUS CHRIST-GLORY FOREVER!

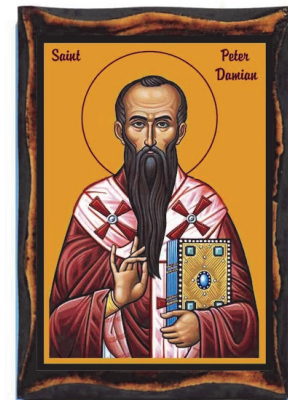
Father Zig

**ST. PETER DAMIAN, Bishop and Doctor of the Church  
February 21 – Patron of Headache Sufferers**

A DEVOTED collaborator of Pope St. Gregory VII and, like him, a Benedictine, St. Peter Damian was one of the most glorious lights of the Church in the 11<sup>th</sup> century. Born in Revenna in 1007, he became a Camaldolese monk at the monastery of Fonte Avellana, of which he became Abbot. He later became Cardinal and Bishop of Ostia and Velletri.

St. Peter Damian worked zealously for the internal reform of the Church by fighting against such abuses as simony and incontinence. He wrote many works on ascetical theology. He is numbered as one of the Doctors of the Church and died at Faenza in 1072.

*PRAYER* Almighty God, help us to follow the teachings and example of St. Peter. Placing Christ above all things, may we be ever active in the service of Your Church and attain the joys of eternal light. Amen.



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

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Fr. Matt: Ext 15 or [frmateuszdarlak@gmail.com](mailto:frmateuszdarlak@gmail.com)  
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