

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

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, April 13, Saint Martin I, Pope and Martyr
 6:30 am – Ray Swan req. by Rosalie Marmara
 8:00 am – Dr. Barbara Carroll req. by Pat Degnan
Tuesday, April 14, Easter Weekday
 6:30 am – Michael & Catherine Kobylar req. by Fr. Zig
 8:00 am – Edward W. & Mary A. Merz req. by Ed & Mary Merz
Wednesday, April 15, Easter Weekday
 6:30 am – Emil Albrecht req. by the St. Cecilia Seniors
 8:00 am – Philip Wasacz req. by St. Monica Guild
Thursday, April 16, Easter Weekday
 6:30 am – Sharon Geckner req. by Nellie Diaz Starks
 8:00 am – Stephen Haran req. by Noreen Breslauer
Friday, April 17, Easter Weekday
 6:30 am – Hector Ivan Agront req. by Taylor Starks
 8:00 am – Bob Isley req. by Susan Brennan
Saturday, April 18, Easter Weekday
 8:00 am – Steve Harlan req. by Carol & Gary McGotty
Sunday, April 19, Third Sunday of Easter
 4:30 pm – Esther Donovan req. by daughter, Phyllis Smith
 Kathleen Sheridan req. by the McKinney Family
 7:00 pm – Special Intention for William Grieco req. by Noreen
 Breslauer
 8:00 am – Jo-Ann Van Der Wall req. by Kristine DeLuccia
 9:15 am – Dave Green req. by the Graner Family
 Maryann Scoppettuolo req. by Family
 10:45 am – Renato Sebastian, Bartola Lopez & Antonita DeJesus
 req. by Family
 12:15 pm – Robert Marmara req. by Sue & Jim Von Dollen
 Jim Marmara req. by the Marmara Family


<u>ST. CECILIA CHURCH COLLECTION GOALS</u>	
<u>Week Ending : March 29, 2026</u>	
Collection—Checks & Cash	\$ 10,518.00
WeShare Electronic Giving	\$ 4,892.80
<u>Total Weekly Collection</u>	\$ 15,410.80
Yearly Collection Goal (BUDGET)	\$ 785,000.00
Weekly Goal	\$ 14,313.73
Weekly Collection Surplus (Deficit)	\$ 1,097.07
Year To Date Surplus (Deficit)	\$ 40,820.07

<u>ST. CECILIA CHURCH COLLECTION GOALS</u>	
<u>Week Ending : April 5, 2026</u>	
Collection—Checks & Cash	\$ 22,845.00
WeShare Electronic Giving	\$ 7,192.54
<u>Total Weekly Collection</u>	\$ 30,037.54
Yearly Collection Goal (BUDGET)	\$ 785,000.00
Weekly Goal	\$ 14,313.73
Weekly Collection Surplus (Deficit)	\$ 7,037.54
Year To Date Surplus (Deficit)	\$ 47,497.61

2025 DMA Goal: \$42,885
Cash Received as of March 3, 2026: \$110,846
Amount over-goal: \$67,961
March rebate: \$33,981

We are thankful for your consistent stewardship. ©JPPC

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, 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 Olgeluie, Mark Howarth, Logan Mattessich, Harry Lusardi, Carmela Cragin, Bob Libak, Mary Lou Baumiller, Patricia Shea, Joseph Bardi, Gloria Benson, William Serafin, Eleanor Sala, Dennis McCoach, Gertrude Colditz, Ethel Sullivan, Joyce Berntsen, Robert Craig.

 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, Sgt. 1st Class Nick Bretzger, US Army. 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

INCREASED OFFERTORY PROGRAM – It has been many years since we had a campaign to bring the question of, *when was the last time you increased your Sunday offering*, to the forefront. In my early years as your pastor, we periodically presented a STEWARDSHIP TALK which encouraged parishioners to seriously consider increasing their Sunday offering and to discover TITHING, the Scriptural plan for giving thanks to God.

In consultation with the diocese, I have arranged to have Cathedral Letter Concepts, a company which assists parishes throughout the United States to bring the message of stewardship to parishioners, to help me in encouraging you to be faithful and generous.

A letter will be going out soon informing you of my effort to raise the awareness and importance of weekly generous offering to the Lord for all the many blessings He bestows. Please join with me in praying that God the Holy Spirit will enlighten our minds and move our hearts to give generously to the Lord.

I know that you love the Lord and cherish our home, Saint Cecilia Church!

Father Zig

Prayer for Peace in the World

Immaculate Heart of Mary,
help us to conquer the menace of evil,
which so easily takes root in the hearts of people,
and whose immeasurable effects already weigh down
upon our world and seem to block the paths
toward the future.

From famine and war, deliver us.
From nuclear war, from incalculable self-destruction,
from every kind of war, deliver us.

From sins against human life from its very beginning,
deliver us.

From hatred and from the demeaning of the dignity
of the children of God, deliver us.

From every kind of injustice in the life of society,
deliver us.

From readiness to trample on the commandments
of God, deliver us.

From attempts to stifle in hearts the truth of God,
deliver us.

From the lost of awareness of good and evil, deliver us.

From sins against the Holy Spirit, deliver us.

Accept, O Mother of Christ, this cry laden with the
sufferings of all laden with the sufferings of our societies.

Let there be revealed once more the infinite saving
power of the redemption-the power of merciful love. May it
put a stop to evil. May it transform consciences.

May your Immaculate Heart reveal fro all
the light of hope. Amen.

- St. John Paul II

**REGISTER FOR NATIONAL EUCHARISTIC PRO-
CESSION** – THE 2026 National Eucharistic Pilgrimage will pass through Passaic and Paterson, June 14-15 as it makes its way along the East Coast of the United States to celebrate our nation's 250th birthday. For registration: MMon-caleano@patersondiocese.org. For registration assistance, please contact: registration@eucharisticcongress.org. The pilgrimage stops will be Holy Rosary Church (6 Wall St. in Passaic); Boverini Stadium (262 River Dr. Passaic); St Michael Byzantine Chapel (415 Lackawanna Ave., Woodland Park) and St. John the Baptist Cathedral (381 Grand St. Paterson).

NEW CHURCH ORGAN – I look forward to your participation in the new church organ appeal which was announced on Sunday, March 22nd. An information sheet regarding the organ and its replacement may be found on the bulletin table located in the church vestibule. We need to raise \$85,000 for this project. I ask for your help and pray that your generous donation will allow us to reach our goal. SAINT CECILIA, PRAY FOR US! – Fr. Zig

NEW ZOOM DISCERNMENT OPPORTUNITY – The Paterson Diocesan Vocations Office will present a series for young men ages 15-20 entitled: "Five Conversations About the Priesthood." It offers a chance to hear about priestly life and ask honest questions. The program will take place via Zoom and 5 consecutive Sunday evenings from 7:30 to 8:00 beginning April 12 and concluding on May 10. Each 30 minute session will focus on a different aspect of priestly life and ministry. Session 1-Priestly Identity; Session 2-The Eucharist in the Priest's Life; Session 3-The Sacrament of Penance; Session 4-Presching; Session 5-Parish Priesthood. Register: vocations@patersondiocese.org or call 973.7778818 x711; ALSO, see QR CODE on flyer posted on bulletin board.

DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY – The Universal Church celebrates next week DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY. Exposition of the Most Blessed Sacrament will begin at 2 o'clock in the afternoon with the praying of the Divine Mercy chaplet. The sacrament of penance will be available during this time. The service will conclude at 3 o'clock. Join us on this Octave Day of Easter as we celebrate the "ocean of mercy" which is available to us if we come to Jesus, our Risen Lord.

RICE BOWL DEPOSIT – The RICE BOWLS from our Lenten alms may be placed in the receptacle located at the altar of Saint Joseph. You may deposit cash and checks (payable to St. Cecilia Church, memo: rice bowl) for Catholic Relief Services, an international arm of the Catholic Church which helps to provide food and clean water for those living in impoverish areas of the world. May God bless you for your generosity. – Father Zig

Monday, April 13

7:00 pm—Holy Hour (Church)

7:30 pm—Bible Study (Hayes Hall)

Tuesday, April 14

9:30 am—Bible Study (Hayes Hall)

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

Wednesday, April 15

8:30 am—Soup Kitchen (Hayes Hall)

7:00pm—2nd Grade Banner Retreat (Church & HH)

Thursday, April 16

8:30 am—Soup Kitchen (Hayes Hall)

Friday, April 17

Saturday, April 18

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

11:00 am—Healing Mass (Church & Hayes Hall)

Sunday, April 19

9:15 am—Liturgy of the Word



THANK YOU – Father Matt and the Sisters of our parish convent and I take this opportunity to thank those who remembered us at Easter. We appreciate your thoughtfulness and generosity. May the Risen Christ richly bless you. Father Zig

THANK YOU – My sincere thanks to those who assisted Father Matt and I in decorating the church and cleaning the church for the Holy Week and Easter liturgies. We could not do it all without the help of our faithful volunteers who love our Lord and His Church! – Father Zig

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION – The children of our parish will be receiving the Holy Eucharist for the first time after instruction by their parents and catechists. The students of Divine Mercy Academy will receive their First Holy Communion on Saturday, April 25th at 10 a.m. The students of our CCD classes will receive their First Holy Communion on Saturday, May 2nd at 10 a.m. and 12 p.m. May Jesus, the Bread of Life, strengthen them with faith and joy.

RETIREMENT – I put into print what I announced at all Masses on January 31/Februaury1, His Excellency Bishop Kevin Sweeney has granted my request for retirement effective July 1st. 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

Divine Mercy Academy News

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!



Registration for the 2026-2027 school year at Divine Mercy Academy in Rockaway is now open!

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.

Please know that you are welcome to call our school (973.627.6003), Monday through Friday, to arrange a private tour and inquire about our benefits

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

MENTAL HEALTH – “From Isolation to Belonging: Mental Health and the Catholic Church” will be held on Saturday, May 2nd at the Diocese of Metuchen Pastoral Center in Piscataway, NJ. This New Jersey Catholic conference offers practical tools and hope-filled guidance for supporting individuals and families affected by mental health challenges in the parish and community. For more information and registration, please visit www.njconf.com.

Divine Mercy Academy Presents *Aladdin*

Join us for a magical theatrical experience as **Divine Mercy Academy** proudly presents its spring play, *Aladdin*, based on the **original classic tale**—not the Disney adaptation. Our talented and hardworking students have dedicated countless hours to bring this timeless story of adventure, courage, and wonder to life on stage.

Performance Dates:

- **Friday, April 17 at 7:00 PM**
- **Saturday, April 18 at 1:30 PM and 7:00 PM**
- **Sunday, April 19 at 2:00 PM**

This enchanting production promises to be a **true delight for audiences of all ages**. Come out to support our school community and celebrate the incredible efforts of our students as they share this magical performance with family and friends. We look forward to seeing you there!

“DERBY DAY AD” – Our parochial school, Divine Mercy Academy, will conduct a tricky tray fund raiser on Saturday, May 9th at the White Meadow Lake Country Club. A program book will be distributed to all guests who will attend the event. You and your business can advertise with a special greeting. Quarter page: \$35; half page: \$60 and full page: \$100. Forms are located on the bulletin table located in the church vestibule. Please consider supporting our school!

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

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

“IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF ST. PAUL” – Father Vidal Gonzales, Pastor of Notre Dame of Mt. Carmel Parish in Cedar Knolls, is sponsoring an 11 day pilgrimage with 2 day Greek Island cruise, October 4-14. Discover the Biblical history of Greece and Turkey in the footsteps of Saint Paul the Apostle. For information, please contact: Tanya D’Souza – 862.209.9037 tancait@gmail.com or Father Vidal – frjvgonzales@gmail.com. The cost is \$4,499 per person from Newark. Information brochure posted on vestibule bulletin board.

HEALING MASS – The Christian Care Committee is sponsoring the annual Healing Mass in our parish on Saturday, April 18th at 11 o’clock. During the Mass the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick will be administered to those who present themselves. A light reception will take place in Hayes Hall following the liturgy.

OUR CHILDREN – Children should be accompanied by a parent or adult when using the restrooms in the parish hall. We want to make sure that our children return to Mass promptly and safely. Your cooperation is appreciated.

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!

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,

We gather on the Lord's Day with the commemoration of several celebrations: the Octave of Easter; the Sunday of Saint Thomas and Mercy Sunday. Every year since the beginning of the Church the Gospel account (John 20:19-31) of the post Resurrection appearance of our Lord to the Apostles is read. "Doubting Thomas" emerges as the one who needs to see in order to believe, but why should he not be any different from the other Apostles who saw and believed. The Risen Christ exults those who have not seen Him yet believe in Him and the power of His Resurrection.

The CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH quotes Saint Thomas Aquinas saying that "Believing is an act of the intellect assenting to the divine truth by command of the will moved by God through grace." It goes on to say that "...because of the authority of God himself who reveals truth, who can neither deceive or be deceived." In the appearance to the Apostle Thomas Our Lord revealed the truth of His victory over sin and death. Through Thomas's witness, and that of those to whom the Risen Lord appeared, faith appeared in the hearts which were open to God's grace.

The reading from Acts of the Apostles testifies to the ecclesial life lived by the first followers of Jesus who worshipped together and cared for one another. The Church grew as a result of this life because others were able to see the authenticity of their faith and came to belief.

On this Divine Mercy Sunday, we recall the appearances the Risen Jesus made to Saint Faustina Kowalska, a Polish religious Sister, on February 22, 1931. The Lord instructed her to write the message of Divine Mercy which He was speaking, although she could not write. She became the "Secretary of Divine Mercy" producing the Diary which contains all that Jesus revealed to her. The Lord also instructed her to have an image of Him painted with the signature: JESUS I TRUST IN YOU. St. Faustina died on October 5, 1938, and this date is her feast day.

We believe in the mercy of Jesus who invites us to come to him with repentant hearts and the resolve to forsake the life of sin. The Lord is calling us to faith so that by living as "Easter People" others may see Christ who is among us.

CHRIST IS RISEN-TRULY HE IS RISEN!

Father Zig

ST. MARTIN I, Pope and Martyr
April 13

A MEMBER of the Roman clergy, St. Martin was sent to Constantinople. Upon the death of Pope Theodore he was elected to succeed him, in the year 649. In the following October he held a Council in the Lateran Church, in which he condemned the leaders of the heresy of the Monothelites, a modification of that of the Eutychians. A document emanating from the Emperor Constans was also censured.

This incensed the Emperor, and he sent Olympius, his chamberlain, to Italy with orders to cause the Pope to be put to death, or to send him to the East as a prisoner. An attempt on the Saint's life in the Church of St. Mary Major was miraculously frustrated. Olympius now became reconciled to the Pope and went over to Sicily.

The Emperor then sent Calliopas and Pellurus to Rome, with orders to seize St. Martin. The Pope, who lay sick, was seized, carried down the Tiber at midnight and conveyed to the East. After three months he arrived at the island of Naxos, where his guards kept him a whole year and subjected him to many indignities.

In 654, Martin reached Constantinople, and for three months he was confined in a dungeon. His sufferings were extreme, but like St. Stephen, he hoped that his persecutors would be brought to repentance. He was banished to Chersonesus in 655, while a terrible famine raged in that region. In his exile, Martin's sorrow was the greater because he regarded the Church as having abandoned him by electing a new Pope. Nonetheless, he prayed constantly for his successor, Eugene I. Martin died in 655, and is the last Pope to be venerated as a martyr.

PRAYER Almighty God, help us to bear worldly adversities with an unconquerable spirit. For You did not let St. Martin Your Pope and Martyr be terrified by threats or conquered by pains. Amen.

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

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