

THE PARISH OF ST. CECILIA ~ ST. GABRIEL

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH
Saint Cecilia **Saint Gabriel**
1184 Newfield Avenue 914 Newfield Avenue
Stamford, CT 06905

February 21, 2021

Rev. John P. Connaughton, Pastor

Rev. Mariusz M. Olbrys, Parochial Vicar

Deacon Larry Buzzeo

Seminarian Anh Vu, Pastoral Assistant



1ST SUNDAY OF LENT

After John had been arrested, Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the gospel of God: "This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel." - Mk 1:14-15

Fr. John Connaughton, Pastor
FrConnaughton@diobpt.org

Fr. Mariusz Olbrys, Parochial Vicar
FrOlbrys@diobpt.org

Deacon Larry Buzzeo
Lbuz@optonline.net

Anh Vu, Pastoral Assistant
Anh.vu@diobpt.org

Parish Center Office Hours:
Monday - Friday, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Main Number 203.322.1562

Maryanne Didlot, Director of Religious Education
DRE@stcecilia-stgabriel.org

Gina DeVito, Parish Office Manager
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Betsy Mercede, Assistant Office Manager
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michele.schule@stcecilia-stgabriel.org

Vicki Alton, Prayer Line
VickiA@optonline.net

Joe Fiorito and Mark Browning, Trustees
Jim Fleischer, Finance Council President

Tom McKiernan, Business Manager
203.246.7681

Lynn Rule, Pastoral Council President
lynn.rule15@aol.com

Patricia Brady, Principal, Catholic Academy of Stamford
203.322.6505

Daily Mass at St. Cecilia Church

Monday through Friday 7:30 a.m.

Weekend Masses at St. Cecilia Church

Saturday (Vigil Mass) 4:00 p.m.
Sunday Masses 8:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m. & 12 Noon

Mass at St. Gabriel Church

Sunday 10:00 a.m.

RESERVATIONS MUST BE MADE FOR ALL WEEKEND MASSES

To make a reservation please go to our Parish Website
<http://stcecilia-stgabriel.org>

The Blessed Sacrament will be exposed for personal devotion
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, & Friday 12:00 noon - 1:00 p.m.
& Wednesday evenings from 7:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Confession Schedule at St. Cecilia Church

Wednesdays: 7:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
Saturdays: 3:00 p.m. - 3:45 p.m.

BAPTISMS: Sundays following Noon Mass at St. Cecilia Church.
Arrangements should be made at least one month prior to the baptism.

WEDDINGS: St. Gabriel or St. Cecilia upon request of the couple.
Arrangements to be made at least six months prior to the wedding.

FUNERALS: St. Gabriel or St. Cecilia upon request of the family.

St. Cecilia - St. Gabriel Parish Mass Intentions

*All Masses will be at St. Cecilia Church
plus an additional 10:00 a.m. Sunday Mass at St. Gabriel Church.*

SATURDAY 4:00 p.m.	February 20, 2021 Bert & Agnes Sessa (Alison Pellicci & Family)
SUNDAY 8:00 a.m.	February 21, 2021 For The Parish
10:00 a.m.	Gary Sessa (Steve & Madeleine Terenzio)
10:00 a.m. <i>St. Gabriel</i>	Richard Moavero, Sr. (Philip & Angela Valenzano)
12:00 Noon	Rose & Rita Napolitano (Donna Napolitano)
MONDAY 7:30 a.m.	February 22, 2021 Dorothy Tierney (Charlie & Gina Denner)
TUESDAY 7:30 a.m.	February 23, 2021 <i>St. Polycarp</i> Margaret Harahan (Her Family)
WEDNESDAY 7:30 a.m.	February 24, 2021 Ralph & Catherine Melisurgo (Jim & Chris Sheehan)
THURSDAY 7:30 a.m.	February 25, 2021 John McGurn (John & Anne Connaughton)
FRIDAY 7:30 a.m.	February 26, 2021 Christine Pierce (The Grossmans)
7:00 p.m.	Stations of the Cross
SATURDAY 4:00 p.m.	February 27, 2021 Deirdre McParland (Betty Hogan)
SUNDAY 8:00 a.m.	February 28, 2021 For the Parish
10:00 a.m.	Patricia DiMaggio Minnick (Her Family)
10:00 a.m. <i>St. Gabriel</i>	Betty Ann Vinci (Her Family)
12:00 Noon	Billy Darling (Cathy Sheehan)

Lessons from this Longer Lent

I'm having a longer Lent than usual this year. Most years it begins on Ash Wednesday, like everybody else's Lent. This year, however, it started on January 4 when I decided to join a small group of local men, including some parishioners, to participate in a program called Exodus 90, which basically extends Lent from its official 40 days to 90 days (the amount of time experts say it takes to form new habits). So, if you think about it, I'm actually more than halfway through my Lent while the rest of you have only just begun yours. Don't be jealous.

The Exodus 90 program first appeared in 2013 and has slowly grown in popularity among Catholic men ever since. It is structured around three pillars – prayer, asceticism, and fraternity. The program encourages its participants to set aside an hour for prayer each day, providing daily readings and reflections as helpful guides. The asceticism part is also pretty intense. It includes cold showers, no snacking, sweets or alcohol, no internet or social media beyond what one needs for work, no video games and no non-essential purchases, among other things. Most people blanch at the mention of cold showers, but I find trying to be disciplined about internet usage most challenging (not that I like cold showers). Finally, the men involved in the program agree to meet once a week to check in and share their experiences, including their fidelity to the program of prayer and ascetical practices.

Overall, my experience with the program has been positive. It has definitely been a bonding experience among the men in the group. The most interesting thing I've discovered through the program of asceticism is not just how attached I am to things (full disclosure: I'm pretty attached to things), but also how thoughtlessly I typically indulge in food and drink, social media, and most other things. The Exodus 90 program has forced me to think more about what I'm doing and to be more aware of my desires. Whereas under normal circumstances I would give no thought to taking a piece of chocolate from a bowl in the office kitchen, or spending 30 minutes scrolling mindlessly through some social media feed, buying something on Amazon, or having a beer at my sister's house – now, I think about it. On those special occasions when I decide to have sweets, watch a show, or have a drink, I do it intentionally, not mindlessly. The effect of this, I've found, is that I appreciate and enjoy these things much more when I freely choose to have them rather than thoughtlessly indulging in them as I'm normally accustomed.

Asceticism has always been a part of the Christian life. Our Lord fasted during His time in the wilderness. The Apostles made fasting part of their spiritual disciplines. Saints throughout the centuries have observed some ascetical practices, and the Church has always taught that asceticism is necessary for growth in holiness. Jesus Himself tells us: "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross, and

follow me.” We do not take up these disciplines to prove how strong we are. We do it to discover how weak we are, and how much in need we are of grace. We can also offer to God the discomfort that comes with our Lenten disciplines for various intentions – such as for an end to the pandemic, for renewal in the Church, for the souls of deceased family members, and for loved ones who struggle. As someone who typically tries to avoid asceticism, this experience of Exodus 90 has been good for me. It has reminded me that asceticism is not just about denying ourselves but learning how to truly delight in the good things that God has given us and to give Him glory through our proper enjoyment of them.

In Christ,
Fr. John

Second Reading: 1 Pt 3:18-22

Beloved:

Christ suffered for sins once, the righteous for the sake of the unrighteous, that He might lead you to God. Put to death in the flesh, He was brought to life in the Spirit. In it He also went to preach to the spirits in prison, who had once been disobedient while God patiently waited in the days of Noah during the building of the ark, in which a few persons, eight in all, were saved through water. This prefigured baptism, which saves you now. It is not a removal of dirt from the body but an appeal to God for a clear conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers subject to Him.

Gospel: Mk 1:12-15

The Spirit drove Jesus out into the desert, and He remained in the desert for forty days, tempted by Satan. He was among wild beasts, and the angels ministered to Him. After John had been arrested, Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the gospel of God: “This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.”

Communion Antiphon: His faithfulness will protect you with a shield.



FRIDAY EVENING AT
7:00 P.M.
ST. CECILIA CHURCH
DURING LENT

All safety protocols that are observed during our regular masses will be in effect. A mask must be worn at all times.



Cindy Stramandinoli, President, along with all the parents and friends of Lower Fairfield Regional Center wish to thank everyone at the Parish of St. Cecilia-St. Gabriel for their continued generosity and kindness to the residents of LFC. “There are sixty-six residents who call LFC their home and many of them no longer have family involvement. You have continued to help us make Christmas a holiday for them by finding just the right gift and wrapping it so beautifully. Our residents are very fortunate to have your Parish as their benefactor at Christmas time - your gifts make Christmas both special and festive here at LFC. During this sad and difficult time for everyone, particularly our staff and residents, your generosity has certainly helped us.”

Mass for the First Sunday of Lent

Entrance Antiphon: He shall call on me and I will harken unto Him: I will deliver Him, and will bring Him to honor with length of days will I satisfy Him. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen

First Reading: Gn 9:8-15

God said to Noah and to his sons with him: “See, I am now establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you and with every living creature that was with you: all the birds, and the various tame and wild animals that were with you and came out of the ark. I will establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all bodily creatures be destroyed by the waters of a flood; there shall not be another flood to devastate the earth.” God added: “This is the sign that I am giving for all ages to come, of the covenant between me and you and every living creature with you: I set my bow in the clouds to serve as a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. When I bring clouds over the earth, and the bow appears in the clouds, I will recall the covenant I have made between me and you and all living beings, so that the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all mortal beings.”

Gradual: He shall give His angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands that thou hurt not thy foot against a stone.



Cardinal Kung Academy, a diocesan school in Stamford with a classical pedagogy, is now accepting applications for grades 7-12 for the 2021-2022 academic year.

For more information or to schedule a visit or shadow day, please contact Barbara Logsdail at

- 203.329.8296
- email: info@cardinalkungacademy.org
- visit our website: www.cardinalkungacademy.org

St. Cecilia - St. Gabriel Parish Offertory Totals

Week ending February 14, 2021

Mail In	\$ 4,161
4:00 p.m.	\$ 1,044
8:00 a.m.	\$ 453
10:00 a.m. combined	\$ 1,298
Noon	\$ 534
Online Giving	\$ 6,196
Additional Monthly Offertory	\$ 371

*Thank you for your continued support and generosity!
Many thanks to those who have signed up for Online Giving
and to those who continue to mail in your offertory envelopes.*



For Online Giving please register at
www.osvonlinegiving.com/1522/
The link is on our website, too!!

Help sustain our parish with Online Giving from OSV. As we move forward into 2021 there are still many uncertainties that lie ahead, and as a parish we continue to adjust. Right now, the ability to participate online is more important than ever. That is why our parish offers Online Giving as an option to support our ongoing mission and ministries. It is time to come together in faith so that we can continue to offer hope and healing to those around us. Online Giving allows you to make donations, payments, and pledges via your mobile phone, smart device or computer to our parish. Set up your gift today or consider an additional gift via our web-based app on your smart device. Visit our parish website to sign up and get started. Our Online Giving system provides you the opportunity to give to our special collections in addition to regular offerings. Even if you typically use your offering envelopes, you may contribute online to a particular collection. It's easy and it's convenient!

Please call the parish office or **OSV Online Giving at 1.800.348.2886** if you have questions or need assistance in setting up your account.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION 2020-2021

IN CLASS LESSONS: FEBRUARY 21ST
HOME STUDY FOR ALL: FEBRUARY 28TH

PLEASE REMEMBER TO SUBMIT COMPLETED LESSONS.

The health and safety of our children, families and catechists are of the utmost importance.

Questions? Please email our DRE Maryanne Didelot at
DRE@stcecilia-stgabriel.org
or call 203.322.1562



S.O.M.E (So Others May Eat)
Please consider a weekly contribution of non-perishable food.

S.O.M.E. Baskets are at the
MAIN ENTRANCE OF THE CHURCH.
Please use strong reusable bags if possible.

**NO GLASS JARS AND PLEASE,
NO PERISHABLE FOOD**

If you would also limit the bags and boxes of rice to 5lb. bags. Your contributions will be delivered to The Food Bank, Wilson Food Pantry, St. Mary's Food Pantry, Person to Person or New Covenant Center every week.
THANK YOU for your responsible stewardship.

Last week we collected 14 bags for
New Covenant Center

Questions? Contact Bob Violette 203.357.1481
Thank you.

The Columbiettes Auxiliary #5833
Continues to Support



With heartfelt thanks for all you have done in the past and all that you have given to the needy in our local community we ask, if you can, to continue your wonderful works of charity.

New Covenant Center cares for the most impoverished in the Stamford area and they are desperate for our help. They are asking for men's socks, along with winter hats and gloves of any size.

In your daily travels, please pick up a pair or two or three. Drop them off at St. Gabriel's Church after the 10:00 a.m. Sunday mass or at St. Cecilia's Church after any Sunday mass or during the week from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. in the vestibule.

Thank you for helping to do God's work.

Questions? Call Nancy O'Connell at 203.561.6222.

We Stand With Christ Capital Campaign

Our *We Stand With Christ* capital campaign at the Parish of St. Cecilia-St. Gabriel has now reached - and surpassed our campaign goal. To date, 15 parish families have pledged a total of \$1,290,300 - 112% of our goal.

We Stand With Christ is a diocesan-wide \$75 million capital campaign that will address pressing needs facing our Church. 50% of the campaign funds we raise will support the Parish of St. Cecilia-St. Gabriel's capital priorities, while the remaining 50% will fund three long-term endowments that help provide Catholic education, pastoral ministries and works of charity throughout Fairfield County.

THE SICK AND THEIR CAREGIVERS



Sal Bonina, Michael Pratt, Nick Pensiero, Ken Byxbee, Conor Ehring, Mary Brundage, Matt Marshall, William Perkins, Tricia Saxe Cocco, Steven Deccicco, Richard Negyesi, Ed Adams, Wendy Lenard, Edward Cioffi, Barbara Cebula, Columbia Smith, Kaye Gill,

Baby Elyssa, Andrew Allesandro, Michael Anderson, Pat Arpaio, Gloria Boccuzzi, Christopher Brady, Amy Burns-Duda, Fr. Michael Cambi, Michael Cooper, Tim Cooper, Allyn Dodd, Carolyn Gagnon, Steve Grossman, Matthew J. Hammill, Eileen Hynes, Melissa Jambol, Musfira Khan, Kitty Mandi, Richard Nanos, Karen Parent, Chet Quinlan, Bill Ritchie, Bonnie Sigfried, Thomas Sparan, Dominic Totino, George Wetzler, Christopher Hoepfner, Caroline Andreana, Lori Ciccarelli, Mark Mullen, George Uzwiak, Alice Carella, Kimberley Pracilio, Marilyn Ritchie, Leon Zavos, Rose Sorbo Barosky, Deirdre, Steven Farrell, Joseph Freeth, Dorothy Tierney, Owen Ryan, Ginny Woolston, Mark Mones, Diane Heach, Kyle Bancroft, Joseph Roche, Randy Palonia, Miguel Machado, Joe Faugno, Sr., John Gaffney, Kevin Pierce, all who travel ... the wounded and recovering military personnel and all who put themselves in harm's way to protect us ... victims of war, terrorism and violence around the world ... those whom we remember in our Eucharistic Celebrations this weekend and throughout the week and those who have died, including William Arnow and Martha Salvatore.

We also have a prayer line available for anyone wishing for immediate prayers. Please send your prayer needs to Vicki at VickiA@optonline.net.

PRAYERS FOR THOSE IN THE MILITARY

We pray that the Lord may preserve the members of our Army, Navy, Marines, Coast Guard, Air Force and National Guard from all harm, especially: SPC Thomas Boccuzzi, LCpl. Michael Lowe, SR Julia Terese Bova, Capt. Josie Quijano-Carpanzano, Capt. Mario Carpanzano, C.J. DelVaglio, Sgt. Taylor A. Ritchie, FN Ellie Fratturo, Lt. Col. Michael J. Souza, Jack H. Whitney, Christopher Ciacciarella, PO Joshua M. Hicks, SR Allison McNamara, 2Lt. James Arpaio.



*Notre Dame de Perpetuel Secours
Creole Mass Schedule at St. Gabriel Church
Saturday at 6:00 p.m. - Sunday at 8:00 a.m.
Tuesday at 6:00 p.m.
Stations of the Cross in Creole at St. Gabriel Church
Friday evening at 7:00 p.m.*



**Tootsie Roll Drive
Running until 2/28/21**

Father Myron V. Miller Council #5833 is asking for your help in their annual Tootsie Roll Drive. Due to COVID-19, the Knights are unable to safely collect donations while distributing Tootsie Rolls in the community.

However, the organizations that benefit from the Knights' fundraising continue to need their support. Please consider an online donation and help the Knights continue their efforts to help people with intellectual disabilities in our community.

In the past, they have distributed donations to Stamford Education 4 Autism, ARI of Connecticut, STAR Inc., St. Catherine's Center for Special Needs, and the Columbiette's Campership Program. These programs depend on the Knights' support to continue to help the local organizations that do so much good in our community.

Link to contribute to their Tootsie Roll Drive:

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/kofc-5833-tootsie-roll-drive>

For additional information, please contact Ed Sheeran at sheeran.kofc5833@gmail.com or 347.334.2907.



THE STAMFORD CATHOLIC YOUTH GROUP

What is youth ministry? It is a time for young people to gather with their peers and with adult mentors to learn more about their Catholic faith, to develop a personal friendship with the Lord Jesus and to grow into a community of young disciples!

For more information, contact Fr. Joseph Gill at frgill@diobpt.org or 203.324.1553

or check out <https://stjohnbasilica.org/youth-ministry>
No cost, no sign-ups, just show up!

Masks will be worn and social distancing will be observed!

Middle School Youth Group Schedule

Regular Youth Group Meetings are from 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
March 5, 19 - April 23 - May 7, 21 - location to be determined

High School Youth Group Schedule

Regular Youth Group Meetings are from 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
February 26 - to meet at Holy Spirit
March 12 - April 16, 30 - May 14, 28 - location to be determined

**Service Projects & Trips for Both
Middle School & High School**

- March 20: Trip to Liberty Paintball in Patterson, NY
- March 26: "Passion of the Christ" movie at Holy Spirit Church 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. - for 8th to 12th graders
- April 9 to 11: Fearless Retreat in Graymoor, NY for 8th to 12th graders
- May 31: Hiking Trip to Sleeping Giant State Park

St. Gabriel Parish . 914 Newfield Avenue (behind the former Trinity Catholic)
Holy Spirit Parish . 403 Schofieldtown Road

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What are you doing this Lent?

Grow in your relationship with Scripture with daily Lenten reflection videos from Dr. Tim Gray. To receive daily emails this holy season use the following link:

<https://formed.org/lent>

Breath of God - A Journey with Fr. Dave Pavonika and the Wild Goose.

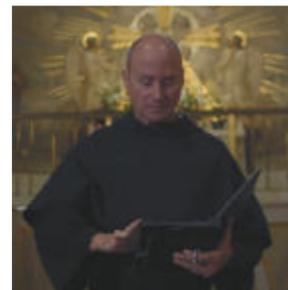
"The breath of the Almighty gives me life." - Job 33:4

The only way we are able to live a life of faith, a life full of love, peace, joy, and power is by the Holy Spirit.

We see this most clearly in the lives of the Apostles. They had every advantage in being with Jesus and hearing Him preach and seeing the many miracles that He had done, and yet, even with that advantage, they were frightened men living their faith life in a locked room before they received the Holy Spirit.

What took place in the upper room changed the lives of these men and women and would change the course of human history. This experience of the Holy Spirit is an encounter available to everyone; it is not reserved for a select few. Pentecost and the transforming power of the Holy Spirit is the theme of this segment. Take 24 minutes out of your busy schedule, you'll be glad you did.

<https://watch.formed.org/videos/breath-of-god>



St. Cecilia – St. Gabriel Bible Study

NO GREATER LOVE:

A Biblical Walk Through Christ's Passion

Tuesday Zoom meetings: 7:00 p.m.

Thursday in-person meetings: 7:15 p.m. St. Gabriel meeting room



No Greater Love is a biblical pilgrimage filmed in the Holy Land that reveals Christ's amazing love for us as we walk step-by-step with Jesus on His journey from His agony in the garden to His crucifixion on Calvary. In just five sessions, we'll learn the ways Jesus is inviting us to grow closer to Him. As we move into Lent, we'll unpack the biblical background to these events, the prophecies and, most especially, the ways Jesus is inviting us to grow closer to Him than we ever have before.

Order your book (which includes online access to video and program) for One Year for \$24.95 plus shipping and handling <https://ascensionpress.com/products/no-greater-love-study-pack>.

Zoom meetings are on Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m. and will run for five weeks.

Be sure to RSVP to receive the ZOOM link and/or reserve your place for the live meeting

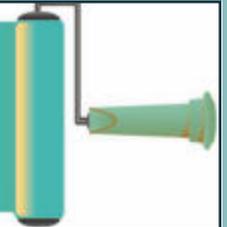
Vicki Alton's cell 203.561.3558 or vickia@optonline.net

In Person group meets on Thursdays at 7:15 p.m. in St. Gabriel meeting room.

Come see why so many have come to love the bible.

This year, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, we are offering a hybrid program that allows people to participate either in person at the hall at St. Gabriel's or through ZOOM. In order to comply with the Bishop's current guidelines, we are encouraging those who are over 65 years old to participate using the ZOOM option. In-person participation will be limited to fewer than 25 people, observing all social distancing and mask requirements.

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