



Church of Saint Cecilia

2357 Bayless Place • Saint Paul, MN 55114
651.644.4502
Fax 651.647.1445 • www.stceciliaspm.org

Weekly Masses:
Saturday 4:30 & Sunday 8:15 & 10:00
Sacrament of Reconciliation: Saturday 3:45



He is not
here.

He is
risen!

PARISH STAFF

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The Church of Saint Cecilia

Moving from Lent into Easter with gratitude...a pastor's epistle

Due to an early bulletin deadline, I'm writing this well before Holy Week has passed. Looking ahead to the plans in place and behind to the season that is ending, I do so with a profound sense of gratitude. There is a long list of people to thank, but I hesitate to assemble it here for fear of leaving out anyone. Needless to say, so many served us well in all the ministries, the activities and the preparation that took place throughout these Holy Days. All this work pays off when we as a community and guests gather and experience together this time of renewal and celebration. **Thanks and Happy Easter!**

Some takeaway questions at Easter

Do you recall a time, a moment or experience when you had a stone (barrier) in your life lifted?

Has there been an experience in your life that left you feeling like an empty tomb, as if the body of your faith had been taken away from you? How or when did you move past or beyond this?

Can you name a time in your life when something good came out of a seemingly hopeless situation?

Relate an experience from your life when inner peace came from facing a peaceful situation.

Name a time when your life began in a new and unexpected way.

In what ways do you need to become more alive in your faith?

John Hofstede



The fact is, the resurrection happened in total darkness.

Sometime in the predawn hours of that Sunday morning, a great mystery transpired in secret. No sunlight illuminated the event. No human being witnessed it.. And even now, two thousand years later, no human narrative can contain it. It exceeds all of our attempts to pin it down, because it's a mystery known only to God. Whatever the resurrection was and is— physical, literal, metaphorical, symbolic — its fullness lies in holy darkness, shielded from our eyes. All we can know is that somehow, in an ancient tomb on a starry night, God worked in secret to bring life out of death. Somehow, in the utter darkness, God saved the world.

Earlier in my life, this ambiguity would have frustrated me. Now it doesn't; it seems exactly right. Why? Because what I have learned in the process of grieving the death of friends is that no story my tiny mind can contain would be big enough to redeem such catastrophic loss. Death is *such* an abyss, such a horror, such a violation— that nothing I can understand or explain will make it okay. Only a mystery as huge as the resurrection will suffice. Only my faith that God will *somehow* complete every story death interrupts, gives me solace. Having seen death up close, I cannot rest in certainty any longer— certainty isn't enough. I can only rest in mystery. My grief can only bear fruit in the dark.

In our Gospel story, Mary Magdalene sees Jesus first because she chooses to remain in the darkness. Peter and John leave when they see the empty tomb, but Mary stays, bewildered and bereft. As Nadia Bolz Weber puts it, she “remains present to what is real, what is actually happening.” She does so even when what is real feels unbearable.

In my own life, I am finding it increasingly true that clarity, hope, and healing come when I am willing to linger in hard and barren places, places where the usual platitudes fall flat, and all easy answers prove inadequate. Jesus comes in the darkness, and sometimes it takes a long time to recognize him. He doesn't look the way I expect him to look. He doesn't let me cling to my old ideas of him. He disappears again just as I grab hold of him. But he comes, he calls my name, and in that instant, I recognize both myself and him. *Continued on next page*

Bulletin Deadline -Wednesday at 9:00am.
Email info. to bulletin@stceciliasp.org.

Prayer Ministry: If you have an intention you wish prayed for, please call Marge Virnig at 651.644.4502 ext. 12 or complete the form on our website.

Stewardship-Fiscal Year July 1, 2017-June 30, 2018

Year to Date Financial Information as of December 31, 2017:

Anticipated Contributions	\$184,344
Actual Contributions	\$177,680
Building Fund Contributions	<u>\$11,495</u>
Total Income	\$189,175

Budgeted Expenses	\$187,919
Actual Expenses	\$166,069
Principal Payments on Debt	<u>\$9,295</u>
Total Expenditures	\$175,364

Revenues Over Expenses	\$13,811
Debt Outstanding	\$113,545

Alms Box Balance as of March 25 \$1,157.85

Come
Join us

Annual Parish Event Sunday, April 29th 11:00am-2:00pm

Mark your calendar and 'Come join us' for an

afternoon of conversation and celebration. Festivities include a dinner prepared by parishioner Adam Sieve—owner of Hazel's Restaurant, a raffle, silent auction, and games.

Raffle and dinner tickets are available for purchase following our Easter Sunday 8:15 & 10:00am Masses, and following all Masses on April 7/8 and April 14/15. New this year: the first 2,500 raffle tickets purchased will come with a \$1 food and beverage ticket for our 2nd annual Oktoberfest (on Saturday, Sept. 29th). For example, when you buy 20 raffle tickets, you will receive \$20 in food and beverage tickets for Oktoberfest!

Don't delay, stop by the link today! Checks are payable to St. Cecilia with a notation of 'parish event'. Watch the bulletin for volunteer opportunities and more.

In a beautiful essay on the resurrection, theologian and writer Chris Barnes reminds us of what actually matters during Holy Week: "The question that Easter asks of us is not, 'Do we believe in the doctrine of the resurrection?' Frankly, that is not particularly hard. Our doctrines bend easily to conform to the darkness.... What the Gospels ask is not, 'Do you believe?' but 'Have you encountered the risen Christ?'"

As I continue to struggle with the loss of my friends, what matters isn't theology — what matters is encounter. What matters is encountering the risen Jesus, and finding in the mystery of his resurrected life the hope I need for my own. Often, it's only in retrospect, only as I look back at the "gravesides" of my life, that I find the beginnings of new life. Poet R.S. Thomas describes the process this way in his poem, "The Answer": There have been times/when, after long on my knees/ in a cold chancel, a stone has rolled/from my mind, and I have looked/in and seen the old questions lie/ folded and in a place/ by themselves, like the piled/ graveclothes of love's risen body."

This Easter, may the Christ who rose in the darkness lead us into new life, new light, and new hope. May we know him in the half-lit places, the shadowy places, the hard places. May we dare to linger at the graveside until he calls our names. And may we always share with hope the news of God's greatest mystery. Christ is Risen. He is Risen indeed. *From "It Happens in the Dark" by Debie Thomas posted on Journey With Jesus 03/25/18*

COMMUNITY NEWS

Office Closed

The parish office is closed on Monday, April 2nd and will re-open at 9:00am on Tuesday, April 3rd.



April 14th & 15th

Feeding the hungry is one way that the St. Cecilia community lives the principles of Catholic Social Teaching. On the weekend of April 14th/15th we will be collecting nonperishable food, personal care items, and monetary donations for our neighborhood food shelf. Checks are payable to St. Cecilia with a notation of "food drive" on the memo line.

Parish Wide Emails

In order to improve our communication, we are now utilizing MailChimp for our parish wide emails. If you are not receiving our emails and would like to be added to the distribution list, please contact Barb Falardeau at bulletin@stceciliasp.org or call the parish office. If at any time in the future you prefer to opt out, the unsubscribe button will be available at the bottom of every email.

Projects Update

We've upgraded our sound system and are replacing our kitchen counters. Donations are welcome to help offset the expenses. Checks payable to St. Cecilia Church, with a notation for the specific project, may be placed in the regular collection basket during Mass or sent to the parish office. Thank you!

Oh My Goodness

Spring slid in recently. Did you notice? It was humming a gentle song about gardening and abundance. Our *Oh My Goodness* kickoff will be April 21st and 22nd, so beware! You may see carrots lurking in the halls. Remember us when your garden plot peeks through the snow, beckoning your attention and imagination.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Immigrant Support Task Force Meeting

The Immigrant Support Task Force meets on Sunday, April 8th at 11:10am in the soft room.

FAITH FORMATION

Bring a Bottle to Support St. C's!

For the upcoming Parish Event, our youth faith formation group hopes to help support the fundraising effort by taking the lead on a new game. **We are asking each WCW/CGS family to donate one bottle or pack of an alcoholic beverage** (wine, hard alcohol, 6-pk of a micro-brew, 12-pk of beer, etc.). Bottles/cans can be dropped off in the office any time. Stay tuned for more details. Mark your calendars for the upcoming event on Sunday, April 29th.

Upcoming WCW Events

Due to the Easter holiday and spring break, WCW will not meet until April 11th for small groups. That evening we will have our Adult Game Night/Social while the students are in class. Join us for a giant game of Bunco! On Wednesday, April 18th we have our annual Sandwich Project, where we will put together sandwiches for the hungry in our community. Potluck at 5:30pm, activity/service at 6:15pm. All are welcome.

PARISH CALENDAR

Sun		Happy Easter! Parish Event Ticket Sales in the Link
Mon		Office Closed
Sat/Sun		Parish Event Ticket Sales in the Link
Sun	10:00	Baptism
	11:00	Sunday Forum

Hymn Numbers:
See worship aid

The Community Events Team Hosts:

St. Cecilia Parish Potluck & New Parishioner Welcome

Here's how it works:

- Gather in Fellowship Hall following the 10:00am Mass to welcome new parishioners and reconnect with familiar faces.
- Enjoy a wonderful meal provided by the St. Cecilia community.
- Please bring a dish to share according to your last name:

**A through G - bring a dessert H through O - bring a hot dish
P through Z - bring a salad**

New parishioners attend as guests.

Please bring your food to the kitchen before Mass on the 15th.

