

# St. Cecilia

## CATHOLIC CHURCH

### Young Family Group

### *Stewardship Through Fellowship*

Stewardship isn't simply about doing or giving. It is relational by nature, drawing us closer to Christ and to the life of the Church. Consequently, hospitality remains an essential element of stewardship. It allows us to convey Christ's warmth to one another and develop that family feeling, making our gifts of time, talent, and treasure all the more meaningful. This can be especially important for new and young families who typically haven't found their "niche" yet in parish life.

"My predecessor, Fr. Felix Lim, identified something missing from community life in the sense that young families, with children who aren't in school yet, didn't have a natural draw into the communal life at the parish," says Parochial Vicar Fr. Patrick Summerhays. "The Young Family Group is one way of making St. Cecilia's a home for those families."

Seeking to minister to all families in the parish, the Young Family Group arose out of a need to provide an opportunity for new and young families to come together, enjoy fellowship with others and to receive a sense of belonging here at St. Cecilia's.

"Parents find themselves at an important transition in their lives [when they have children]," says Co-Founder



*The McCauley Family at the Young Family Group Halloween Party in 2016.*

Happy Kramer. "Oftentimes, they are reconsidering and thinking about religious practices and realizing that instilling moral values involves an authority greater than their own."

Meeting four times a year, the Young Family Group allows families to come together in a relaxed environment. In this way, they are surrounded by others who have gone or are going through the same phases of life, providing them with encouragement and support through the reminder that they are not alone in their faith and family journeys.

"It's a whole parish thing," says Gracie Mulcrevy. "It's really wonderful and it really fosters a greater sense of our parish family."

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## Teaching by Example

### *The Importance of Prayer in a Child's Life*

“I want to be just like Mom and Dad!” Perhaps nothing lifts a parent's heart like hearing these words. While certainly affirming, such words also remind us of the great responsibility that comes with parenthood.

Children often examine the lives of their parents when making decisions that will affect their own lives. For example, a young boy may dream of becoming a physician one day, just like his father. Or a young girl may hope to become a veterinarian, just like her mother. Could the same be said about their parents' faith lives?

Just as children learn traits and values from their parents, they should also learn the importance and great joy of developing a personal relationship with Christ. And the foundation of such a relationship is prayer – conversation with God.

How should we go about teaching our children to pray? There are several methods, but none works as well as teaching by example. Begin teaching the importance of prayer by praying openly with your spouse. This teaches children that prayer is meaningful and important, and not just a ritual. Also, pray with your children – in the morning and in the evening. Show your

sons and daughters the importance of beginning and ending each day in prayer.

A good rule of thumb is to start simple – maybe an Our Father or Hail Mary, and then move into something more complex – Hail, Holy Queen or Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel, among others. Begin with prayers your children can pick up fairly quickly. Not only will this show them that praying can be fun and easy, but shorter prayers are also usually easier to understand.

Teach your children the importance of spontaneous prayer, rather than just prescribed prayers. Spontaneous prayer is any prayer that is created at the same time it is offered. Another way to think of spontaneous prayer is “praying in your own words.” Structure spontaneous prayers according to the ACTS acronym – Adoration, Contrition, Thanksgiving, and Supplication. In layman's terms, this means beginning each prayer with words of adoration, such as “You are the Lord God Almighty. I love you.” Move into a period of contrition, asking God's forgiveness for the sins you have committed. Then, give words of thanksgiving, thanking God for the gifts He has given. Finally, spend time sharing with God your heart's desires. These intentions can be personal or on another's behalf. Following this format ensures that spontaneous prayer “covers all the bases,” and doesn't become just a mental wish list. While God wants to hear and grant our wishes, He also expects words of adoration, contrition and thankfulness.

The best time to begin praying with your children is right now. The sooner they learn about prayer, the sooner they can begin cultivating their own relationship with Jesus. Many parents even pray with their children before birth, hoping their unborn son or daughter can hear their words in utero. Remember, there is no better way to teach one's children about the value of prayer than by example.



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## A LETTER FROM OUR PASTOR

### *Give Thanks to the Lord, It Is Right and Just*

Dear Parishioners,

Every time I prepare my monthly letter to you in this newsletter, I am reminded how blessed I am to have been your pastor for 23 years.. Being a priest truly is a blessing.

As we complete our preparations and then share in our celebrations of the Triduum and Easter, I am also prompted to think about the holiest things I do. By far, the holiest is celebrating Mass, and especially consecrating the holy bread and wine so Christ is present among us. The very word "consecration" literally means "association with the sacred." To have that duty is incredible. I have never taken it for granted, and although it may appear at times to be somewhat automatic, it never is for me.

Almost all of us are familiar with the Mass, and the two main parts, the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. We are challenged to be open to the scripture readings and allow them to touch our hearts. We are challenged to be attentive to the Liturgy of the Eucharist. But I think we must guard against becoming too casual in our responses and in what we say. That is what I work to avoid, but I believe you need to work just as diligently to make sure that you are listening, hearing, and being aware of what you are saying. For us as Catholics, the Mass is the most important sacred act in the Church.

I suppose I could write a whole series of letters or articles on the meaning of everything we say and do at Mass, but I was thinking of one exchange in particular



during the Liturgy of the Eucharist. It is something we may say in sort of a habitual way, but I firmly believe each of us must truly consider what we are saying.

I say to you, "Let us give thanks to the Lord our God," and you respond, "It is right and just." Think about what that means, because it is very much at the heart of stewardship. I am saying we need to thank God, show gratitude for everything we are and everything with which we are gifted – and you, at least in words, acknowledge that doing that is exactly what we need to do. The Mass is filled with statements and exchanges of that sort, and I would

ask that we really think about what they truly mean.

Even the simple exchange between the Eucharistic Minister and you at the actual reception of the Bread of Life and the Chalice of Salvation is heavy with meaning. We say, "The Body of Christ," and you reply "Amen." We say, "The Blood of Christ," and you reply "Amen." In that instance, "Amen" means "Yes, I do believe this is Jesus." Like myself, you are blessed. Sometimes we just need to realize it. Happy Easter!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Msgr. Michael D. Harriman  
Pastor

## Supporting Our Kids *The St. Cecilia*

If you are a parent, then you know what it means to make your child's day.

"The joy that you see on your child's face when they see you at hot lunch or on Multicultural Day or at the Christmas Boutique—it's so rewarding," says Teresa McLoughlin, mother to a kindergartner and fourth-grader. "My boys are so happy to see me at the school, and they know that I care about their school and what's happening at their school."

It can be easy to see involvement in your child's school as just one more thing on your never ending to-do list. But here at St. Cecilia's, we hope that serving our school will be more than just an obligation. It's our hope that participation will be a chance to contribute to your child's education, while also finding support and fellowship from other moms on the same journey.

"Mothers Club is a fun way for mothers in the school to participate," says Teresa, who has been involved for the past four years, currently serving as the Mothers Club President. "The kids love to see their mothers helping out and being part of these events."

Mothers Club, which has served St. Cecilia School for many years, supports the school in a variety of ways,



*Moms from the Mothers Club help to host various fun events for the students, such as Multicultural Day.*

from sponsoring fun events for the students, to hosting fundraisers, and contributing to the silent auction at the parish festival. Although membership in the Mothers Club is required, with dues being used towards teacher gifts and other class expenses, mothers are encouraged to find ways to get involved and volunteer at fundraisers and other events.

"A lot of private Catholic schools in San Francisco require time and money to be donated, and St. Cecilia's doesn't require either of those things," Teresa

says. "It's because the Mothers Club does such a great job raising money for the school. It's important for us to appreciate that we're not required to do these things. When you do help out and participate, it can be rewarding and fun, and it can create a sense of joy that you wouldn't get otherwise."

From purchasing new English textbooks for the entire school and building the Kindergarten Kingdom, to refinishing floors and much more, the funds raised by the Mothers Club contribute greatly to fulfilling the needs of

If you would like to learn more about becoming active with the Mothers Club, please contact Teresa McLoughlin at: [st.ceciliamothersclub@gmail.com](mailto:st.ceciliamothersclub@gmail.com). You can also find updates and more on Mothers Club events at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/scmothersclub/>.

This year, the spring fundraiser is St. Cecilia Academy Awards, highlighting short films made by school students, celebrating the inspirational power of film. The event, held at the school pavilion, will take place on April 8, at 6 p.m. The evening will include food and drinks, the Academy Awards, a live auction, and dancing. Tickets are \$100/person and can be purchased online at: <https://scssf.ejoinme.org/oscars> – all event details are also available on the website. Please be generous in supporting our school and students!

# ds and Each Other: Mothers Club



*Moms volunteered to represent various cultures and their food, including Irish food, Filipino food and more!*

our children and our school.

For Teresa, who attended St. Cecilia's as a child, it is important to support the values of Catholic education by giving back.

"It's really important to me that I

find a way to create some benefit to the school," she says. "It makes me feel so proud that I can be a part of it. I can't help but feel happy that we're able to provide so much for the kids."

For many of the moms who

participate, Mothers Club has also become a way to meet new friends and build the sense of community. The three general meetings each year include dinner and drinks, and a chance to get to know other school moms.

"My hope is that Mothers Club gives mothers what it has always given them - great friendships and people you can turn to and lean on and help in times of need," Teresa says. "It's about community. This is our village. The meetings are a good way to come together and get to know each other."

Teresa encourages all school moms to become involved in serving with the Mothers Club.

"I would encourage anyone who is reluctant to come and be a part of one small thing, and that one little thing will really help your heart grow," she says. "It really creates this wonderful feeling inside. You can create friendships and do something wonderful for your kids."

## Young Family Group

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Each gathering involves arts and crafts, games, a meal, and a movie for the children, and is planned around the following themes - Halloween in October, St. Nicholas in December, St. Patrick's Day in March, and a play day at the park in May. Truly making this a ministry supported by the entire parish, the Men's Club provides adult beverages such as wine for each event, while the seventh and eighth-graders at the school earn their service hours by helping

with supervising and entertaining the children.

The generosity of many people makes this ministry possible, including that of parishioners Ivor and Sarah Bradley, who provide delicious meals for each gathering. In this way, the Young Family Group wholeheartedly welcomes young families to St. Cecilia's, inviting them to make it their home parish and remain anchored in the faith as they grow as a family.

*If you would like to get involved or learn more, please contact Fr. Patrick at the parish office at 415-664-8481. Please keep an eye on the bulletin for information on the next gathering.*

## Offering Our Love and Adoration to Jesus

**E**ucharistic Adoration is the adoration of Jesus Christ present in the Holy Eucharist. Churches that have this adoration display the Eucharist in a special holder called a monstrance, and people come to pray and worship Jesus.

Christ's great love for us was shown when He was crucified on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins and give us eternal life. He loves us without limit, and offers Himself to us in the Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist. Can we not give Jesus a few minutes of love and adoration in return?

### **What is the importance of Eucharistic Adoration?**

Eucharistic Adoration is the respect and worship we give to Jesus, who is truly present to us under the appearance of bread and wine. The Eucharist is a priceless treasure; by not only celebrating it but also by praying before it outside of Mass, we are enabled to make contact with the very wellspring of grace.



### **What are the fruits of Eucharistic Adoration?**

People who observe Eucharistic Adoration experience a deeper devotion to Jesus, and this manifests itself in countless ways. The primary fruits are repentance and conversion, which lead to increased charity – that is, the love of Christ alive in His people. The adoration of Jesus in the Eucharist also leads to greater reverence at Mass, a deeper desire for personal holiness, and a stronger sense of union with the parish and the whole Church. Ever since the early centuries of Christianity, the Church has linked Eucharistic Devotion to service to the poor. The practice has, more recently, led to an increase in vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and religious life.

### **What is proper etiquette during Eucharistic Adoration?**

When we are not taking part in vocal prayers and hymns with other adorers, we should be praying silently. Whenever we pass before the place where the Sacred Host is reserved, we should genuflect. We should observe the modest dress and decorum that are appropriate to very solemn occasions. We should avoid any actions that might disturb or distract others, or otherwise draw attention to ourselves rather than Jesus.

### **How should we pray during Eucharistic Adoration?**

There are many ways to pray. We may meditate in silence by gazing on the

*At St. Cecilia, we have 24-hour Eucharistic Adoration on the first Friday of every month in Our Lady's Chapel, and we have Evening Prayer and Adoration every Saturday at 4:30 p.m., also in Our Lady's Chapel.*

Sacred Host. We may silently speak to Jesus from our mind and heart. We may also rely on devotions and prayers from Catholic tradition, such as the reading of Scripture, recitation of the Rosary, or the litanies. When two or more are gathered before the Sacrament, they may pray or sing hymns together.

### **What is the best way to promote Eucharistic Adoration?**

The best way to promote Eucharistic Adoration is by doing it! Make frequent visits to Jesus at the tabernacle. Invite your spouse, your children, your neighbors and co-workers to join you. As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* reminds us, "Because Christ himself is present in the sacrament of the altar, he is to be honored with the worship of adoration. 'To visit the Blessed Sacrament is ... a proof of gratitude, an expression of love, and a duty of adoration toward Christ our Lord'" (1418).

# **“An Education Guided by Faith Serves as a Foundation”**

## *St. Cecilia’s Mannion Family*

When Tom and Meredith Mannion began raising their family in the San Francisco area, they knew that they wanted to carry on the Catholic tradition that has existed in both of their families for over a century.

They toured several Catholic schools in the area and ultimately went to a St. Cecilia Open House.

“We immediately felt welcomed by the parish community, for it’s such a vibrant Catholic community,” Meredith says. “We thought it would be an excellent fit for our growing family.

Today the four Mannion children – eighth-grader Claire, sixth-grader Nora, second-grader David, and kindergartner Annie – attend St. Cecilia School.

“We really wanted to give our kids an education guided by faith that would serve as a foundation from which to grow,” Tom says. “We also chose St. Cecilia because of its academic rigor, athletic opportunities and Christian values.”

In addition, Tom and Meredith also value the service opportunities that a Catholic education provides through hands-on outreach activities and service-based learning.

“We both believe that when we serve our community with our actions, we glorify God to the fullest,” Meredith says. “With four kids, life can get busy. Even if it’s an hour here or an hour there, we try and find time to give



*The Mannion children on the first day of school – (from left) Nora, Annie, Claire (back) and David*

back so we can be an example for our kids.”

Tom has been a member of the St. Vincent De Paul Society (SVdP) St. Cecilia Conference for the last 10 years. He helps deliver bread from a local French bakery and sandwiches made by students and parishioners to the SVdP Multiservice Center. He has also volunteered with parish and school functions.

Meredith began as a greeter for the Children’s Faith Formation Program when the kids were young and later helped raise funds for the CYO sports program. Recently, she has become a Eucharistic Minister, serving beside her daughters at Mass.

“Our involvement in the school and in the parish have allowed us to live out our faith in a deeper and more meaningful way,” Meredith says.

The Mannion children are also involved in parish and school life following the example of their parents. Claire is a peer leader, Eucharistic Minister and serves as an altar server.

“Being an altar server has brought me closer to my church community, especially the priests and sacristans,” Claire says. “I enjoy getting to participate in the Mass and give back.”

Nora also recently became an altar server. Together, the two oldest Mannion children have found that



*The Mannion family – Tom and Meredith with their children (from left) Nora, Annie, David and Claire*

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# St. Cecilia Catholic Church

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San Francisco, CA 94116

Church Office: (415) 664 - 8481  
www.stcecilia.com

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## St. Cecilia's Mannion Family *continued from page 7*

through serving at the altar, they have become closer to the Church and to Christ.

"I am lucky that I get to serve with my sister and some of my friends," Nora says. "I am able to interact with different people in the church and school community, which brings me closer to God."

With four young children, Tom and Meredith will be the first to admit that life can be overwhelming as they try to balance everything, but they have seen the fruits of being involved as stewards.

"Making time for the school and our faith community has allowed our family to meet so many

dear friends and has fostered a deeper relationship to God," Tom says. "St. Cecilia has provided us with a generous support network and a true sense of community."

The entire Mannion family feels blessed to have joined such a supportive community in the parish and the school.

"We are deeply inspired by so many people who consistently dedicate their time and attention to the school and the parish," Meredith says. "We feel so blessed to have joined such a supportive community, and we are honored to help out in any way we can."

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### LITURGY SCHEDULE

**Saturday:** 5:00 p.m. (Vigil Mass) **Sunday:** 7:30, 9:30 (Family Mass), & 11:30 a.m.

**Weekdays:** 7:00, 9:00 a.m. & 5:30 p.m.

**Reconciliation (Confessions):** Saturday, 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.