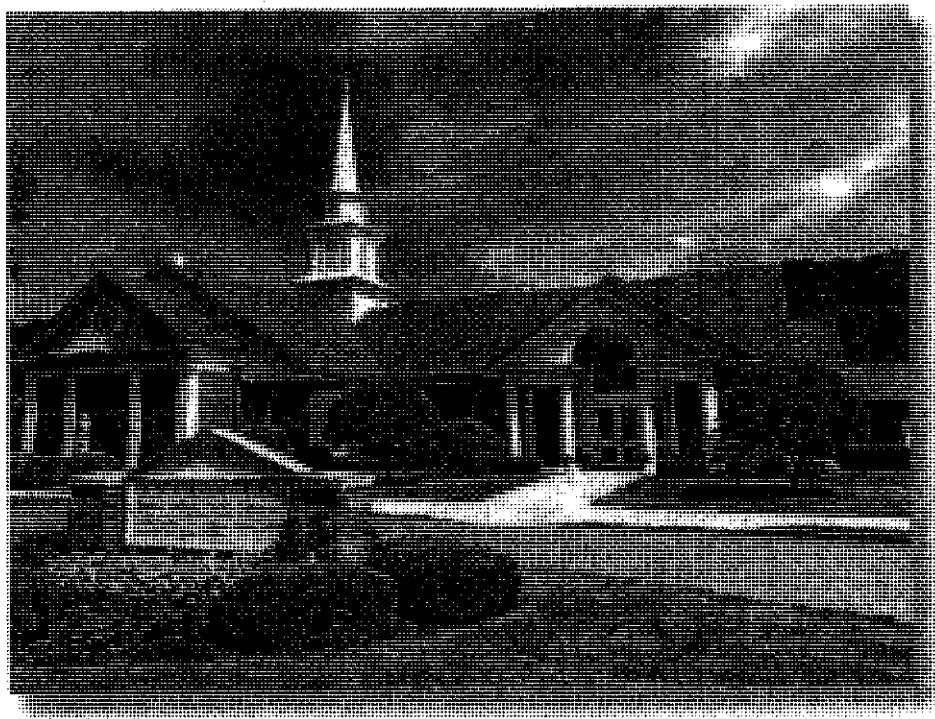


Saint Cecilia Parish



**Bishop Rozanski's
Parish Visitation Report
February 25, 2020**

St. Cecilia, Wilbraham Parish Visitation Report – February 25, 2020

The Bishop's Parish Visitation

The purpose of a parish visitation is to help me be better aware of the situations and challenges facing the parishes and missions of the Diocese of Springfield. The visit also allows me the opportunity to provide guidance, encouragement, assistance and direction to support the ongoing effectiveness of ministry in and among the parishes of the diocese. Finally, a pastoral visit affords me a way to appreciate and affirm the abundant, ongoing grace of God evident in the faith and witness of the Church in the communities of the Diocese of Springfield.

With these purposes in mind, I thank your former pastor, Fr. Boyle, the parish staff; councils and committees, and all concerned with this visit for their consideration and cooperation with me and members of the diocesan staff.

Introduction

St. Cecilia's parish was founded in 1951 with Fr. John Scanlon as pastor. By 1958 the parish had doubled in size and a new church was consecrated on the feast of St. Cecilia in 1958.

In October of 1988, Fr. Joseph Serrano was named the fourth pastor. The parish continued to grow and Fr. Serrano spearheaded a campaign to build another church. The first Mass was celebrated on November 22, 1996.

The parish continues to flourish and today has a professional staff of eight, supported by many volunteers.

Commendations

Given the energy and activity I observed, I make the following commendations and recommendations to guide and support the pastor and staff of St. Cecilia's Parish in your efforts to work together to extend the presence and power of God's love. I recognize the good work done here and invite you to reflect with me as I review with you my observations and learning's from this recent pastoral visit.

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Pastor

As bishop, I thank Fr. Dan Boyle for his leadership of St. Cecilia's parish over the past six years. Fr. Boyle succeeded Fr. Joseph Serrano and wisely used the structures that were in place that had been an integral part of parish life. I commend Fr. Boyle for his pastoral care of the people, his willingness to work hand in hand with the members of the staff and his ability to work with the various groups of the parish. I also wish Fr. Boyle God's blessings in his retirement and pray for his health and well-being over these coming years.

I know I join with the people of St. Cecilia's in thanking Fr. Dan and asking God's blessings upon him in retirement.

Deacons

- I commend Deacon James Ziemba for his work in nursing homes.
- I commend Deacon Jim for his works with those coming to have children baptized.
- I commend Deacon Jim for his work with the Hope Ministries.
- I commend Deacon Andrew Nowicki for his commitment to the Faith Formation Program.
- I commend Deacon Andrew for his work with families coming to have their children baptized.
- I commend both deacons for their assistance with liturgical ministries.

Staff

- I commend Annette Bishop for the courteous, pleasant manner in which she handles the parish office, works with and supports volunteers.
- I commend Annette for the many hats that she wears and for the professional way that she executes each task.
- I commend Annette for her work with the finance team, for the welcome letters she sends to new parishioners and for her efforts to keep all things running in the parish.
- I commend Ann Matthews for her volunteer service to the parish as a member of the office staff.

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- I commend Ann for the kind and compassionate way she greets people who come or call the office needing help.
- I commend Ann for her work with the bulletin and for keeping the data base up to date.

Pastoral Minister

- I commend Sr. Mary McCue for her many years of service to the people of this parish, especially the homebound and those in nursing homes or assisted living facilities.
- I commend Sr. Mary for her work with those who are mourning the loss of a loved one, from funeral planning to ongoing support and prayer.
- I commend Sr. Mary for her work with the senior connection, the woman's ministry as well as her leadership of the Hope Ministries.

Music Ministry

- I commend Todd Rovelli and the music ministry for their beautiful music which so greatly enhances the parish liturgy.

Ministry of Hope

- In place of a parish council, the parishes has established The Hope Ministries to support some of the ministries of the parish. HOPE stands for Help our Parish Expand. The ministries they serve are Haiti Ministry, Heifer Ministry, Survival Center, Hope at Home and Bethlehem House. The parish supports each of these ministries in a variety of ways and raises funds through the sale of various gift cards and direct donations.
- This ministry is highly effective and helps the parishioners to experience firsthand joy and satisfaction in making a difference in a person's life.
- I highly commend the idea and the work that goes into it this ministry.

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Faith Formation

- I commend Rosemary Oldread for having an open registration policy to meet each family's needs.
- I commend Rosemary Oldread for incorporating Mass into the Faith Formation program.
- I commend Rosemary Oldread for getting the middle school students involved in community service projects.
- I commend Deacon Andrew Nowicki and Rosemary Oldread for working together to teach the High School students in fun and meaningful ways.
- I commend Rosemary Oldread for quickly implementing the New Circle of Grace Safe Environment Program.

Youth Ministry

- I commend Carolee McGrath for her energy and enthusiasm in running the youth group.
- I commend Carolee McGrath, Deacon Andy Nowicki and Rosemary Oldread for working together as a team to serve the needs of the youth of the parish,
- I commend Carolee McGrath for using other adults to engage with the youth group recognizing that the young people.

Child and Youth Protection

- I commend Suzanne Lawson for her commitment and leadership as the Child Advocate and for her ongoing commitment to creating a Safe Environment for Saint Cecilia's Parish.
- I commend Suzanne for her commitment to both VIRTUS and Cori checks. Among active members of the parish community, 155 have completed Safe Environment training through VIRTUS and 137 have completed a background record check.
- I commended Suzanne for implementing the new *Circle of Grace® Safe Environment curriculum* for children and youth in the religious education program.

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Finance Team

- I commend the finance team for their commitment to meeting regularly
- I commend the finance team for their efforts to create a realistic budget.
- I comment the finance team for creating a 60 day operation reserve.

Maintenance

- I commend Jim Salve, George Lynch, Ken Flanagan and Ron Serra for their work in maintaining the parish property.
- A complete report submitted by Russ Sprague is included with this report.

It is clear that St. Cecilia's is a unique community trying to be faithful to its mission. In light of the learning from the visit, the following recommendations are offered to the parish leadership. I suggest that you continue to dialogue with your new pastor, Father John Connors, as you consider these areas for thought and action. Of course, all the Diocesan offices continue to be available to the parish for support and cooperation in your ministry.

Recommendations

My next set of remarks are for Father Connors. It is my hope that with him, this document may be reviewed by you as you plan for the future of the parish. Please know that I am grateful to all the members of the staff and parishioners who made the day a great visit!

- That the new pastor work with the staff members to assess which aspects of parish life need his attention in the short term and also to look at some long range planning for the parish.
- That the new pastor take the time to review the current parish structures, work with them and assess with the members of the different groups their effectiveness and room for improvement.
- That the new pastor listens to the needs of the people in the long range planning for the future of the parish.

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- That the pastor work with the Finance Committee to strategize on how best to use the stewardship of the parish in light of current expenses.
- That the pastor works with parishioners and staff to reach out to new people to in welcoming them and encouraging them to participate in the life of the parish.

Parish Staff

- I recommend that the parish staff continue to work with Fr. Connors to provide support for the parish programs.
- I recommend that they consider regular staff meetings to give themselves time to get to know one another and establish a working environment that grows with the parish.

Pastoral Minister

- I recommend that Sr. Mary continue her fine work in the parish and assist the new pastor in any way she can.

Ministry of Hope

- I recommend that the Ministry of Hope continue their fine work.

Faith Formation

- I recommend that Rosemary be made a full-time salaried employee in light of the size of the program and her responsibilities.
- I recommend that the Faith Formation website section be updated to reflect the current materials that are being used in the program.
- I recommend that there be a Faith Formation Handbook developed to provide program information to the parish families.

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Youth Ministry

- I recommend Carolee, Deacon Andrew continue their efforts to include the young people of the life of the parish.

Child and Youth Protection

- I recommended that the parish Child Advocate and DRE continue to implement the *Circle of Grace*® *Safe Environment curriculum* for children and youth.
- I recommend that the Child Advocate ensure that all active clergy, employees and volunteers of the parish complete a background check in accordance with the Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) Policy for the Diocese of Springfield.

Finance Team

- I recommend the finance team continue tireless efforts to keep the parish aware of the financial situation.
- I recommend the finance team consult with the pastor on the feasibility of changing his living situation.

Finally, I thank all who have cooperated in this visitation process. I feel very encouraged by the faith and energy I discovered at St. Cecilia's Parish and I look forward to working with you for the glory of God and the benefit of all the people of your area. Be assured of my prayers for all involved in your parish as you work together into the future on your faith mission,

Sincerely,

+Mitchell T. Rozanski
Apostolic Administrator, Diocese of Springfield
August 1, 2020

Diocese of Springfield

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MEMORANDUM

To: Sister Paula

Date: March 27, 2020

From: Russell A. Sprague

Subject: Site Visit

On February 25, 2020 Bishop Rozanski and Father Dan Boyle, Jim Veal, Tom Mango and myself did a walk thru of St. Cecilia campus. The campus is made up of the church, rectory, parish center and a faith formation center.

The church is a slab on grade, brick veneer and CMU backup walls, laminate columns, beams and decking structure with asphalt shingles for the roof, built in 1996 replacing the old church. The interior is finished wood, terrazzo floors, beautiful granite baptismal pool. Structure has a sprinkler fire protection system, intrusion alarm and is currently getting a fire alarm system. Heating and cooling are gas fired with the mechanical room located in back of the sacristy.

The parish center is the former church (built in 1958) and upgrade in 1996. It is a slab on grade, brick veneer and CMU backup walls, carpet of vinyl tile floors, with wood floors in the multipurpose room. Walls are painted sheetrock and ceilings are drop in acoustical tile. It has a conference room, chapel, 4 offices, brake room, mechanical room, bathrooms, multipurpose room (old worship space) and a commercial kitchen. Roof is asphalt shingle. Heating and Cooling are gas fired. Sprinkler fire suppression system present. Intrusion alarm present and fire alarm in process. All permits posted.

The faith formation center is a former brick veneer wood frames one story house with a full basement that was bought back in the 90's. It contains an office and meeting/classrooms on both levels. It has a fairly new oil fired boiler with a tank located in the basement area. Roof has asphalt shingles. Building has a security system but no fire detection. Recommended they either get some battery operated smoke detectors installed or consider upgrading the security system to a combination one.

The Rectory is off site and is a wood framed structure donated to the parish back in the 50's. We did not visit it.

It is a pleasure going to St. Cecilia. Annette, Jim and Tom keep on top of maintenance and frequently ask my advice.