

CATHEDRAL
BASILICA



OF SAINT LOUIS



THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD DECEMBER 25, 2024

MASSSES ON THE LORD'S DAY

5:00 pm Sat (vigil)
8:00 am, 10:00 am,
12:00 noon, 5:00 pm

Live Streaming

Sunday Mass at 10 am
Daily Mass at 8 am

WEEKDAY MASSES

7:00 am (Mon-Fri)
8:00 am (Mon-Sat)
12:05 pm (Mon-Fri)

OPEN WEEKDAYS

6:30 am – 5:00 pm

LITURGY OF THE HOURS

Evening Prayer
4:30 pm (Sat)

OPEN SATURDAY/ SUNDAY

7:00 am – 6:30 pm

CONFESSIONS

7:30–8:00 am
(Monday through Friday)

3:30–4:50 pm (Sat)
9:00–9:50 am (Sun)
11:00–11:50 am (Sun)

PERPETUAL HELP DEVOTIONS

Following 8:00 am &
12:05 pm Mass (Tues)

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

3:30 pm–4:30 pm (Sat)
8:30 am–11:45 am
(Every First Friday)



WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS

Archbishop Mitchell T. Rozanski and the people of the Archdiocese of St. Louis welcome you and hope that your time in our Mother Church may be an opportunity to share our faith and joy in Jesus Christ.

Please enjoy the beauty of this building dedicated to the glory of God and built for the inspiration of all who enter.

All visitors who are not of the Catholic faith are welcome to join us in prayer, but not to receive Holy Communion. Reception of Holy Communion is a sign of unity of faith and full membership in the Catholic community. Together let us pray for the eventual unity of all believers.

Welcome to the Cathedral Basilica of Saint Louis! Archbishop John Glennon began the building of this beautiful expression of faith in 1907 providing an uplifting environment for Catholic worship and an inspiring place for private prayer. Its unique design combines architecture of Romanesque style on the exterior with a wondrous Byzantine style interior.

In the narthex (vestibule), the mosaics depict the life of our patron, Saint Louis IX, King of France, and provide a preview of the beauty in the main body of the church. The great center dome, which pulls the eye towards heaven, and the two lesser domes and half domes, together with the arches, reveal in mosaic art the story of the Catholic Faith from creation to the last judgment. Portraying scenes from both the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures, the mosaic work pictures men and women of our Judeo-Christian history as well as illustrating the more recent development of the Catholic Church in North America and particularly in St. Louis.

This is one of the largest collections of mosaics in the world, created by 20 different artists and

covering 83,000 square feet. The installation, containing 41.5 million pieces of glass tesserae employing over 7,000 colors, began in 1912 and completed in 1988 by the Ravenna Mosaic Co. In the Cathedral, we have two types of mosaics, Italian, which are used in the Blessed Mother and All Saints Chapels, and Byzantine, which is in the remainder of the Cathedral. Italian style are made of colored marble rather than glass, it lacks the reflective quality and looks more like painting rather than mosaics. Tiffany Company of New York installed these two chapels. Tiffany did not use marble however; they used glass in pastel colors that were semi opaque to resemble marble. The Byzantine style in the rest of the Cathedral is made of colored glass and gold leafed glass. They are very bold and intense colors. When installed, they use a small tool to tilt random gold tesserae pieces to reflect the light and shine.

In recognition of its beauty and the historical significance of the Archdiocese of St. Louis, Pope John Paul II designated the Cathedral of St. Louis a Basilica on April 4, 1997. Having that distinction, the Cathedral displays two special symbols, the tintinnabulum (the bell) and the ombrellino (the umbrella) – these are currently in the Blessed Mother Chapel during the Christmas Season.

Depending where you are in the Cathedral here are some things you may see in the mosaics. A boy on crutches. A deer. A globe of the world. A headless saint. Jonah & the whale. Keys of St. Peter. A lamb. A llama. A shamrock. The Statue of Liberty. A steamboat. A cabin. The Cathedral Basilica of St. Louis. Tongues of fire. Symbols of the four Evangelists. Books. A Raggedy Andy doll. An angel blindfolded. The six days of creation. The Ten Commandments. A harp. A dove. St. Louis with the Crown of Thorns. A sailboat. White horses & a chariot. A lunchbox. Loaves of bread. Peacocks. There is beauty all over the Church, and even more celebrating the birth of our Savior.

**FROM OUR RECTOR**

Dear Parishioners and Visitors,

As we celebrate the joy and wonder of Christmas, I offer my heartfelt greetings and blessings to you and your loved ones. This holy season invites us to reflect on the miraculous gift of God's love, revealed in the birth of Jesus Christ—God made flesh, come to dwell among us.

In the midst of the busyness of the season, it is important to pause and reflect on the deep meaning of Christmas. The Nativity of our Lord reminds us of God's incredible love for each one of us. In the quiet of a Bethlehem stable, Jesus came into the world as a child—vulnerable, humble, and full of promise. This is the profound mystery of our faith: that the Creator of the universe chose to come to us in the simplest, most human way, offering us the ultimate gift of peace, hope, and salvation.

The Cathedral Basilica, with its beautiful mosaics and sacred space, is a place where we can gather as a community to celebrate this great gift. Whether you are a regular member of our parish family or a visitor from afar, it is a joy to have you with us this Christmas. Together, we share in the light of Christ, a light that shines brightly in our hearts and in the world.

As we reflect on the Christmas story, let us remember that the message of the Incarnation is not just a story for one day, but a call to live with love, joy, and compassion every day. Christmas is a time to renew our commitment to follow Christ in all that we do—to serve others, to seek peace, and to be a light in the world. In this way, we make the joy of Christmas a part of our daily lives, sharing the love and hope that Christ brought to the world.

I am deeply grateful for all who make the Cathedral Basilica a place of vibrant worship and fellowship. Your presence, your prayers, and your support make this community a beacon of faith. As we celebrate the birth of our Savior, let us remember that we are united in Christ, and that His light continues to guide us.

On behalf of all the clergy, staff, and volunteers here at the Cathedral Basilica, I wish you a blessed Christmas. May the peace, love, and joy of Christ fill your hearts this season and throughout the coming year.

Reverend Monsignor Henry Breier





DECEMBER 25, 2024



2024 Baptisms



DECEMBER 25, 2024



2024 Weddings



Beauty & Sacred Music in the Liturgy: A Pathway to Reverent Worship

In the Catholic Church, the liturgy is an encounter with the Divine, and every element within the Mass, from the words of the Eucharistic prayer to the gestures of the priest, is designed to direct our hearts and minds toward God. Among these elements, sacred music holds a unique place. Through its beauty, sacred music has the power to elevate our worship, guiding us into a deeper awareness of God's presence. As Pope Pius XII said, "Sacred music must be true art, otherwise it will be impossible for it to exercise the minds of those who listen to it. 'That efficacy which the Church aims at obtaining in admitting into her liturgy the art of musical sounds.'" In this, Pope Pius reminds us that sacred music is not merely decorative or entertaining; it is an essential form of prayer that, when truly artistic, assists in our worship and draws us closer to the mystery of God.

He further explains, "Beauty is what holds truth and goodness to their task." Sacred music, when done beautifully, holds the truth of the Gospel and the goodness of God's love in such a way that it leads us to a deeper participation in the liturgy, helping us to worship more worthily and attentively. The beauty of sacred music is not just aesthetic—its purpose is to help us encounter God and be transformed by the worship we offer. As Bishop Robert Barron says, "Do not subjectivize, and therefore relativize, the beautiful. The beautiful is as objective as the good and the true. The beautiful is as objective as the truth of a mathematical equation." For more on this, watch Bishop Robert Barron's YouTube video entitled "Reflections on Beauty."

The Role of Sacred Music in the Mass

Sacred music in the Mass is not an optional addition; it is an integral part of the liturgy, designed to deepen the worship experience. When performed with beauty and reverence, music has the power to stir the soul, preparing it to receive the grace of the sacrament. The Church has always recognized the profound effect that music has on the faithful, which is why sacred music is considered a means of encountering the Divine. When one sings or plays an instrument in worship, it ceases to be merely a musical performance, but becomes prayer itself.

The beauty of the music helps to facilitate a deeper connection to the mysteries of the Mass. Whether through Gregorian chant, hymns, or choral settings of the liturgy, music invites the faithful to step out of the ordinary and into the sacred. It elevates the heart and mind, enabling us to contemplate more fully the sacred action occurring before us. As Pope Pius XII articulated, sacred music is intended to "exercise the minds" of those who listen to it, drawing them into a deeper understanding and participation in the liturgical mystery.

The St. Cecilia Retreat: A Day of Prayer, Reflection, and Music

This fall, our cathedral was honored to host a special retreat day in celebration of St. Cecilia, the patron saint of music. The day featured two keynote speakers—Dr. Peter Latona and Dr. Larry Feingold—who helped us reflect on the profound connection between beauty, sacred music, and prayer. The event included morning prayer, two insightful talks, and a High Mass, all centered on how the beauty of sacred music helps us worship the Lord with greater reverence.

Dr. Peter Latona's presentation focused on the concepts of the love of music and the love of God. He introduced us to the Greek word *agape*, which refers to a selfless, unconditional love—and the association with God's love for humanity. Dr. Latona explained how this concept of love can shape our approach to sacred music in

the Liturgy. He used *agape* to form an acronym that encapsulates the key qualities that sacred music should embody:

Artistic – Sacred music must first and foremost be a work of art. It should be beautiful and thoughtfully composed, not for the sake of utility, but as a form of worship and reverence. At Mass, music is not meant to be merely functional and fill empty time and space, but rather be an offering of beauty to God.

Genuine – Music must be genuine in its intention. It is offered for the greater glory of God, and all gifts, including the gift of music, must be returned to God with gratitude. This means that music in the liturgy should be authentically offered, not for personal gain or glory, but to help the assembly unite their hearts in the worship of God.

Authentic – Sacred music must remain faithful to the rich tradition of the Church's musical heritage. It should align with the theological and liturgical practices passed down through centuries, ensuring that the music reflects the true faith and upholds the integrity of Catholic worship.

Purposeful – Every piece of music sung at Mass must be suitable and appropriate to the liturgical moment. Music must enhance the prayer of the assembly, aligning with the theme of the Mass and deepening the worship experience. Whether it's a hymn of praise, a choral motet, or a Gregorian chant, each piece must be purposeful in helping the congregation participate fully in the sacred action.

Evangelizing – Finally, sacred music must be evangelizing. It should inspire and uplift the congregation, inviting them into the presence of God. Through the beauty of music, we should be drawn into a deeper understanding of the Gospel and encouraged to live out our faith in the world.

Music as a Bridge to Divine Beauty

Dr. Latona's teaching on the *AGAPE* model emphasizes that sacred music is not simply an aesthetic practice, but a means of drawing the faithful into an encounter with God. Music, when offered with beauty and purpose, becomes a bridge that connects the human experience with the divine. Again, as Pope Pius XII asserts, sacred music's role is to "exercise the minds of those who listen to it" by drawing them into the spiritual and theological depths of the Mass. It is through music that we are invited to participate in the sacred mysteries, to reflect on the beauty of God's truth, and to be transformed by His goodness.

The St. Cecilia retreat day was a poignant reminder of the importance of sacred music in the life of the Church. It underscored that music at Mass is not simply about creating an atmosphere of reverence, but about creating a space in which the faithful can more fully encounter Christ. Whether it is through the sublime tones of the organ, the soaring beauty of a choral anthem, or the reverent simplicity of a chant, sacred music elevates the liturgy and invites the worshippers to enter into the sacred mystery of God's love.

Sacred Music as a Gift of Beauty

Sacred music is an essential part of the liturgy, a gift that helps the Church offer prayer and worship in beauty and reverence. Through its artistic, genuine, authentic, purposeful, and evangelizing qualities, sacred music enables us to lift our hearts to God and more fully receive the grace of God through Holy Mass.

With the words of Pope Pius XII in mind we must ensure that music is not just an expression of art, but a means of encountering the living God. May we continue to embrace the beauty of sacred music, allowing it to draw us into a deeper, more worthy worship of the Lord in every celebration of the Mass.



Reverend Zachary Povis

Parochial Vicar

“Glory to God in the highest,” the angels sing in praise of God after announcing the birth of the Savior to the shepherds outside of Bethlehem. “Glory to God in the highest,” we ourselves proclaim today in union with the angels, the saints, and Christians around the world who celebrate today that miraculous birth 2000 years ago.

As you look around the beautifully decorated Cathedral Basilica; as you listen to the beautiful voices of our cantors and choir who have spent so many hours rehearsing in preparation for today; as you actively participate in sacred worship along with our altar servers, lectors, deacons, and priests who help to facilitate our liturgical prayer, know that all of it is directed to the glorification of almighty God. “Glory to God in the highest.”

We come together in this solemn and joyous celebration every year, and so many individuals in our community put so many hours into ensuring that our celebrations are dignified and festive because this is what Christians do: we glorify almighty God. The community here at the Cathedral Basilica puts so much time and effort into making our celebrations beautiful because we hope for them to be an earthy reflection of heavenly realities. We facilitate prayer and reverent worship because this is part of the way that we glorify God.

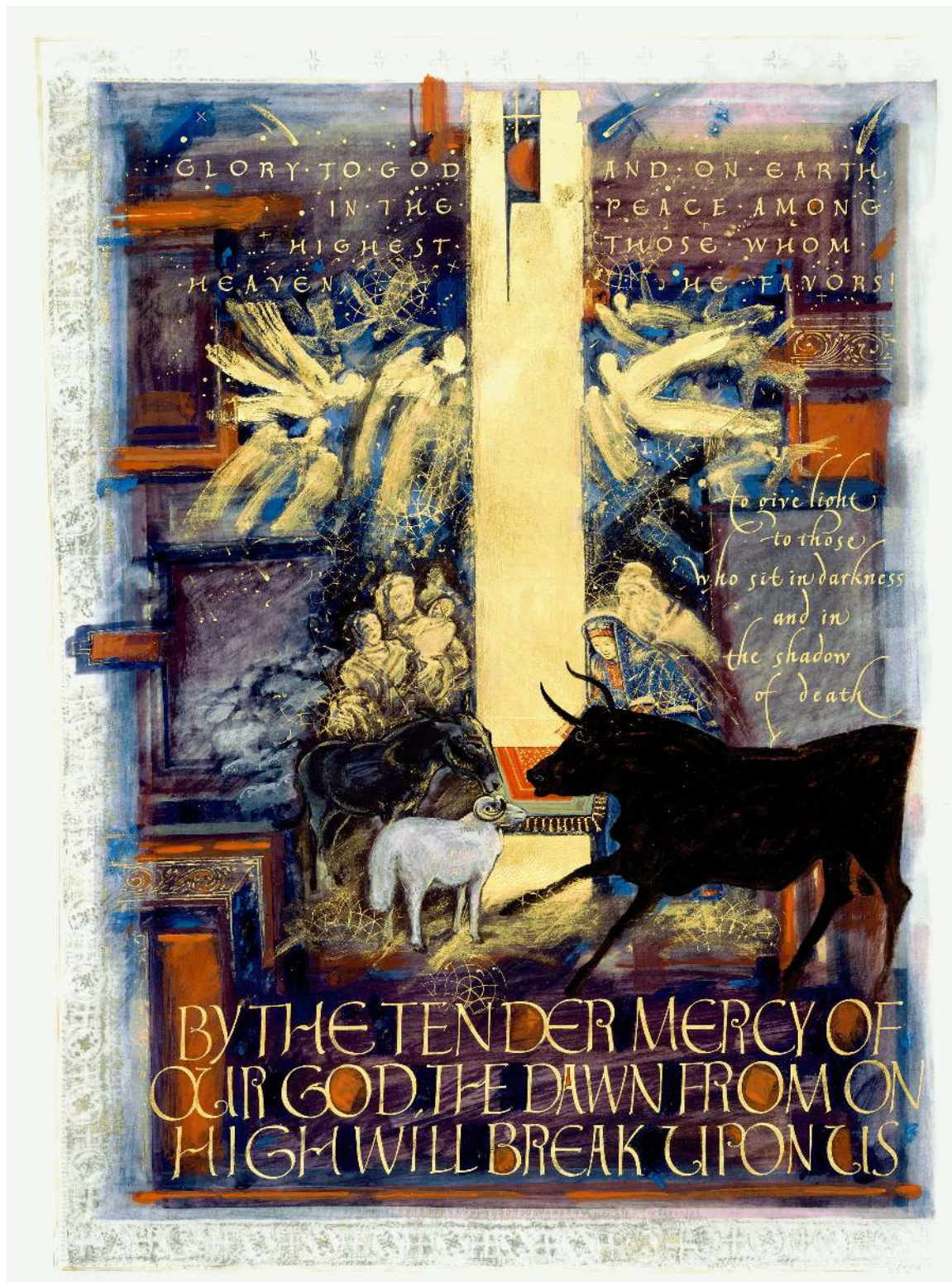
The privilege of glorifying God goes far beyond our celebration of Christmas of course. It’s the motivation behind everything we do here as a parish community. It animates the diligent work of our St. Vincent de Paul Society, who meet every week to assist those in need. It’s the reason our young adults gather every single week for adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and time for fraternity with one another. The gatherings of the Men of the Cathedral and Women of the

Cathedral for adoration, book studies, and service are rooted in the same desire to glorify God. So too do the events hosted through our Cathedral Concerts series and the work of our own cathedral choir and schola. The generosity of the Friends of the Cathedral Basilica and all those who make financial sacrifices for the upkeep and maintenance of this beautiful space is directed to the glorification of almighty God. Indeed, everything that the vibrant parish community here at the Cathedral Basilica undertakes in the multitude of ways that the active members of our community come together shares this purpose. It’s the purpose we share with all Christians around the world and the angels and saints in heaven: “Glory to God in the highest.”

As we hear the angels proclaim that purpose once again today, we are all invited to re-commit ourselves to it. Today, we celebrate how intimately our loving Creator chooses to involve Himself in His creation: willing to be born as a baby in a manger. God lowers Himself in order to raise us up: to transform us into living icons of Himself so that all that we say, think, and do might glorify Him. In striving to glorify God, we live our truest identity, find joy and fulfillment, become instruments of peace and sanctification of our brothers and sisters, and prepare ourselves for the eternal happiness of heaven.

As you go forth from this place whose entire purpose is to glorify God, perhaps consider how God wishes to transform your own life for His glorification. God enters the world in order to transform the world. Our lives are meant to be caught up in that transformation so that we might be living reflections of the message which the angels proclaim today:

“Glory to God in the highest!”



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