

January 11th, 2024



Second Sunday in Ordinary Time



## The Pastor's Column

### Bless Me Father

At the end of every Mass here at St. Paul's, someone always approaches us Paulists asking for a blessing. It could be for anything: good health, upcoming surgery, safe travels, birthdays, retirement, you name it. Groups ask as well: Families, couples, pilgrimage groups, and so forth. In all cases we extend God's blessing without question. And why not? At the conclusion of Mass we have already extended God's blessing to everyone in the congregation. All baptized Christians are free to convey God's blessings on others, not just on those who sneeze!

Therefore, I am grateful for "Fiducia Supplicans" the declaration the Pope issued on the 18th of December in response to a question posed to him: Can same-sex couples (or anyone who is married outside the Church) receive a blessing from a Catholic priest? He answered YES. Media reaction was immediate and distorted: "The Pope Says Yes to Same-Sex Unions!" Our phone rang off the hook asking for comment. We were judicious and demurred,

knowing that all that glitters isn't gold. In the middle of decking the halls with boughs of holly, we needed time to review the document.

So now that the pine needles have settled, the big question remains: What does this mean? The Pope's declaration reminds us that God will never stop blessing all of us: saints, sinners, and all in between. That is God's nature. Further, it states that those who ask for a blessing show themselves "to be in need of God's saving presence" in their lives by expressing "a petition for God's assistance, a plea to live better" (Paragraph 21). The document goes on to say that "Blessings should be evaluated as acts of devotion." Those requesting a blessing "should not be required to have prior moral perfection" as a precondition. Blessings like these are "an expression of the Church's maternal heart to open one's life to God, to ask for his help to live better, and also to invoke the Holy Spirit so that the values of the Gospel may be lived with greater faithfulness." (§ 40)

What's the hitch? You've guessed it: "The blessing should never be imparted in concurrence with the ceremonies of a civil union, and not even in connection with them." (§ 39). The declaration goes to great lengths to separate this simple blessing given casually and freely from anything resembling a sacramental marriage or a liturgical blessing. Nor does the document change church teaching on its understanding that marriage is intended solely for the union of man and woman.

So, we've come to that classic Catholic place where no one is happy. For those in same-sex marriages like my cousin Andrea, there is continued disappointment. As she put it: "Those of us in loving same-sex marriages already are blessed!! The message that same-sex couples still don't quite measure up [is] still the same." On the other side of the spectrum, reaction ranges from radio silence to general apoplexy. Some religious superiors are prohibiting their priests from offering such a blessing.

I find the Pope declaration positive in that he affirms the nature of God, who blesses and loves all of creation. God's love is available to all who call upon Him. There is a lot of hate in the world right now, and the Pope is not playing into it. Bravo! Yet, this is "half measurish" and has caused a lot of confusion. All I can hope is that this is a baby step towards greater inclusion and appreciation of the blessings brought to the church and society by those in committed same-sex marriages. I further hope that this step will lead to an expansion of the Church's pastoral care of those seeking same-sex marriage in the Church.

I am grateful to our Out at St. Paul's ministry that continues to lift up the dignity and gifts of the LGBTQ community. Their presence and action in our parish is well known near and far. I like to think we have had a hand in helping the Pope take this small yet significant step. That said, further advocacy is needed.

In the meantime, we here at St. Paul's will continue to accompany and bless all those who come before us with open and sincere hearts. That you can count on!

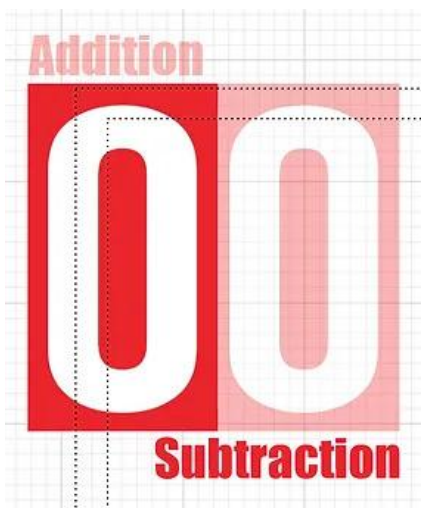
May God bless you and your loved ones!

Fr. Eric



Reverend Eric Andrews, CSP  
Pastor, St. Paul the Apostle

## Parish Spotlight



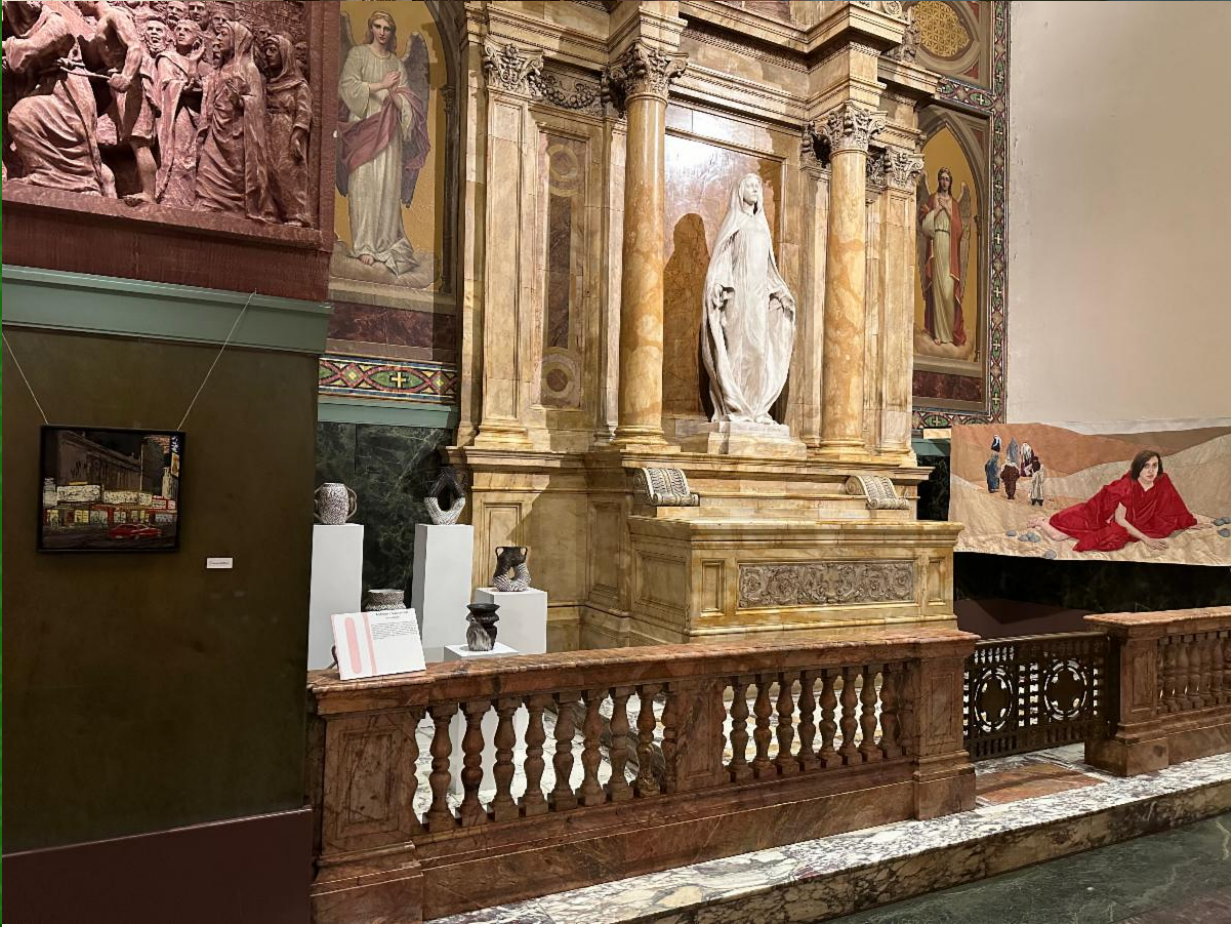
### Openings Collective: Art Exhibit at St. Paul's

The 17th Annual group exhibition of the Openings Collective, *Addition/Subtraction*, is now on display in the church!

With this year's theme, *Addition/Subtraction*, artists were asked to consider the ways in which they create. Some consider this theme from the abstract: minimize/subtract to emphasize simplicity, placing culture and meaning in their work as it relates to the greater whole. Others approached work by maximizing and highlighting their artistic, social, or political attitudes through expressions of abundance and vibrancy. Some artists saw the theme as literal: adding to their work, building up paint, ink, layers, clay, matter, emulsions, text, prose ... or creating knowing they will be removing and subtracting, reducing, and simplifying.

If you happen to catch this e-mail early and are in the area, join us in the church TONIGHT from 7PM - 9PM for the opening reception of the exhibition!

The artwork will be on display in the church through February 10th.





## A New Year Note from OCIA: Kintsugi

On behalf of the entire OCIA ministry, Happy New Year to all! Here's a brief update on what we are up to:

**First, we now have a cohort of 22 energetic catechumens and candidates.** We're very grateful for the witness of our entire parish community, and for your prayerful support last Fall when we welcomed our candidates and accept people into the catechumenate.

We regathered last Sunday for our Christmas/Epiphany celebration, and we kicked off the new year with a little exercise inspired by the Japanese art form of Kintsugi. This art form involves taking broken vessels such as tea cups, bowls, plates, and vases, and reassembling them in such a way that they are more beautiful and more valuable than the original vessel.



I learned of this technique through the Japanese artist and theologian Makoto Fujimura who reflected on Kintsugi as an expression of our belief in God's desire to heal and redeem us. Just as Kintsugi is concerned with a broken

vessel, Christian life involves recognizing our finitude and brokenness. Yet it is also the case that God desires to heal what is broken and bring renewal. Here is what Fujimura has to say about Kintsugi in his book *Art and Faith: A Theology of Making*: “The example of Kintsugi captures, and enlarges this promise... Christ came not to 'fix' us, not just to restore, but to make us a new creation.” Surely we will be new creatures in Christ with our scars and blemishes, which God will make more beautiful.

We hope you may gain some inspiration from this as you look ahead to Lent. As always, please pray for our candidates and catechumens!

Dave de la Fuente  
*Director of OCIA, St. Paul's*



## Upcoming Events

# *Behind the Scenes at the Synod*



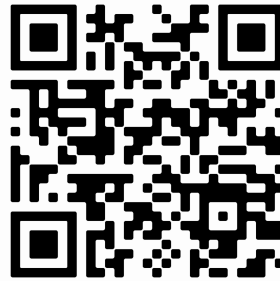
featuring  
Fr. James Martin, SJ

Join us in the Parish Center on Sunday, January 14th after 5PM Mass for a special talk from acclaimed Jesuit author, editor-at-large of America Magazine, and St. Paul's parishioner, Fr. James Martin. Fr. Martin will give us a behind the scenes look at his weeks at the Vatican as a participant in the 2023 Synod on Synodality.

Want to tune in from afar? The talk will be livestreamed via Zoom – sign up at

the link below to have the Zoom call information e-mailed to you in advance of the talk.

[Please RSVP for the event by filling out the form linked here](#) or by scanning this QR code!



Father James Martin with his fellow synod delegates at the Synod on Synodality in October

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Tomorrow, January 12th at 7PM, please join in the Celebration of the Life of Steven Harris, a former Paulist Father who died on November 2nd.

Steven was Associate Pastor here in the 1990s. A Memorial Service - to honor this remarkable man who gave so much to so many - will be held at St Paul's.

In lieu of any flowers, his family asks that we please consider a donation in Steven's name to [Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS](#).



### **NEXT SUNDAY: Welcome Weekend**

We have moved our Welcome Weekend celebration to next week, January 20th and 21st!

Want to meet the folks in the pews you've sat next to but never really gotten to



know? Stop by the back of the church after all of our masses to grab some refreshments and build community with your fellow parishioners.

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### **Faith Formation**

**Wednesday, January 17th - 6:30 PM-8:00 PM**

We will gather in the Parish Center to hear from Fordham students who made a special trip to Rome to immerse themselves in the Synod on Synodality, and will explore what synodality means for our community of young adults in the church.

### **After-Mass Social**

**Sunday, January 21st - 6:00 PM**

Want to get to know the Apostolist community better? Meet us in the back of the church after the 5 PM mass and we'll step out for some fun and fellowship. In January, we are planning to have dinner together at Bareburger.

### **Virtual Bible Study**

**Monday, January 22nd - 6:00 PM via Zoom**

Join us over Zoom this winter for virtual Bible Study with the Apostolist community! You can expect lively exchanges and thoughtful reflections. For this session, we will discuss readings around the Feast of the Conversion of Saint Paul. [Please RSVP here](#); we will send a link to participants on Monday before the session begins.

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## OSP Seasonal Mass

Join us on Wednesday, January 17th at 6:30PM in the church for mass! The seasonal masses are a great opportunity to connect with the OSP community, or to reconnect if you've been away for a while. We look forward to praying with you there!



**Our annual OSP Winter Retreat is here! The gathering will take place from February 9th - February 11th at the San Alfonso Retreat House in Long Branch, NJ.**

This year's theme is "Show Up and Take a Stand" and together we'll explore and celebrate how being fully present in our identities as LGBTQ+ Catholics and allies strengthens our faith in God, the relationships in our lives, and our wider communities.

Spend a weekend on the peaceful winter Jersey Shore, a quiet and idyllic environment to pause and reflect. Reconnect with OSP friends, meet new friends, and experience a supportive community ready to accompany you and support you on your journey.

Join us for a weekend of unique opportunities: spiritual nourishment and tools, service to the community, and social moments of friendship and fun. Whether you are new to the OSP community, or if this is your annual spiritual getaway, all are welcome! Our community and Church are stronger with you in it.

[To register or get more information about logistics and payment options, visit our website here!](#)



# Confirmation

## Adult Confirmation

For a variety of reasons many of us were not confirmed as teenagers. If that's you, take this opportunity to renew your Faith.

Classes are informal scripture based reflections on catholic belief, prayer and your own journey of faith. **We meet Wednesdays at 7 pm, starting January 24th at the Parish Center (405 West 59th Street).** Our Confirmation Liturgy will be celebrated on April 20th with Bishop Espaillat.

To register for classes or get any questions answered, please reach out to associate pastor Fr. Paul Rospond; [you can find his contact information here](#).

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## Breakfast with Isaac Hecker

hosted by Fr. Ron Franco, CSP

In honor of our patronal feast day, the Conversion of St. Paul on January 25th, we will have a special gathering on the life of the founder of the Paulist Fathers!

Join the St. Paul's community and Fr. Ron Franco, CSP on Saturday, January 27th after the 9AM mass for a continental breakfast and a discussion on the life of Fr. Isaac Hecker.

If you're interested in attending, [please register for free by filling out this brief form](#) so we can anticipate how much food to order! We look forward to seeing you there.

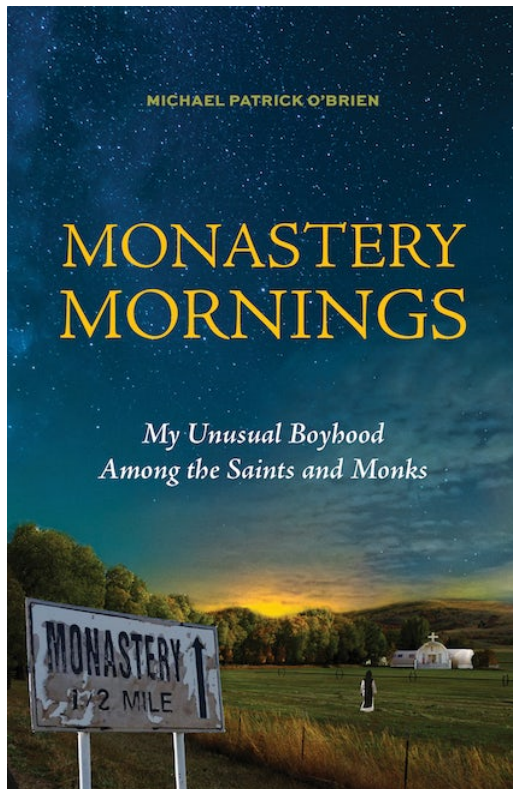
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## MID-DAY CONCERT: Visiting Voices from Temple College

The Visiting Voices program features young people's choirs and orchestras from across America touring the nation. Join us on **Monday, January 29th at 9:30AM** to enjoy the talents of the 40-voice choir from Temple College, Texas!

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## St. Paul's Book Club

Join us via Zoom on  
**Tuesday, February 20th**  
**at 6:30PM**

for our discussion of  
*Monastery Mornings*  
by Michael Patrick O'Brien

Please RSVP to  
[welcomecenter@stpaultheapostle.org](mailto:welcomecenter@stpaultheapostle.org) to  
receive our meeting link!

### About the book:

This warmhearted memoir describes how a small, insecure boy with a vibrant

imagination found an unlikely family in the company of monks at Holy Trinity Abbey, in the mountains of rural Latter-day Saint Utah. Struggling with his parents' recent divorce, Michael O'Brien discovered a community filled with warmth, humor, idiosyncrasies, and most of all, listening ears. Filled with anecdotes and delightful "behind the scenes" descriptions of his experiences living alongside the monks as they farmed, prayed, buried their dead, ate, and shared the joys of life, *Monastery Mornings* speaks to the value of spiritual fatherhood, the lasting impact of positive mentoring, and the stability that the spiritual life can offer to people of all ages and walks of life.

## Holy Humor

Me: Sometimes when I flick the  
water off my razor I pretend it's the  
aspergillum

Priest: once again kind of weird  
but not a sin



## Prayer Requests



# Prayer Requests

Grant eternal rest to Reginald & Torrance Jean Black, Christine Resman, Geraldine Gillen, Anna Loiacono, Igor Mencos, Luis Raul Ortiz, Sylvia Popkin, Nelly Gomez, James & Peggy John, Walter J. Yarrosh, Angelina Smith Gray, Mario Viernes Locquiano, and Rosana Niemeyer.

Grant health or healing to Teddy Suvak, Tripp Jones, Anne Troy, Ashley Oken, Isaac Morales, Alex Nelson, Alexandra Evans, Ariela G., Sara Lissa Paulsson, Vanessa Belsito, Seamus Miller, Maureen Moriarty, Rev. Ronald Yarrosh, Samuel Perrins, Donnie Strickland, Daniel L. Rodriguez, Ricardo Cameron, Paolo Struff, Christopher Henderson, Stephanie Boccuzzi, Eileen Schreiber Anders Valeur, Carmine Poppiti, Keon Whyte, Susan O'Dell, Sandra Guillen, Carmen Reyes

Grant peace and well-being to Elise Wilkins, Hilda Ojeda, Damianus Aditya Christie, James Golka, Andrew R. Moynihan, Mary & James Miller, Mary Neven Marsh, Freda Q. Malanyaon, Genevieve Brockway Kuhar, the Wilkins family, and the Gorelick family.

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Have someone you would like our parish to pray for? You can submit prayer requests through our online form below. The names in your intentions will be shared with the parish here and will remain in our virtual newsletter one month after submission.

Click the button below to fill out our prayer request form:

[Submit Your Prayer Requests](#)

# Mass Intentions

## Friday, January 12th

7:30AM † Gavino P. Abaya, Jr.

12:10PM - Daniel Luis Rodriguez

## Saturday, January 13th

9:00AM - Joseph Previl

5:00PM - For the People

## Sunday, January 14th

8:00AM † Salvatore Catherine Mazzella

10:00AM - Susan O'Dell

12:30PM † Jonathan Diaz & Family

5:00PM - Carol Rex Grathwol

## Monday, January 15th

10:00AM - For the People

## Tuesday, January 16th

7:30AM † Christopher Wieczorek

12:10PM † Philip & Rose Dondiego

## Wednesday, January 17th

7:30AM † Daniel Harris

12:10PM † Conchita Espinoza

## Thursday, January 18th

7:30AM - Susan O'Dell Viola

12:10PM - Adriana Lucheckko

# Parish Information



## Church Hours

Monday-Tuesday, Thursday - Friday

7:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Wednesday

7:00 AM - 7:00 PM

Saturday

9:00 AM - 6:30 PM

Sunday

7:00 AM - 6:30 PM

## Mass Schedule

Monday - Friday

7:30 AM and 12:10 PM

Saturday

9:00AM and 5:00 PM

Sunday

8:00 AM - Mass Without Music

10:00 AM - Mass With St. Paul's Choir  
12:30 PM - Misa con Coro en Español  
5:00 PM - Mass With Inspirit Ensemble



**Donate flowers for weekend masses and special occasions to beautify our sanctuary!**

Make a gift in honor of or in memory of a loved one. Their name - and even yours, if desired - will be acknowledged on our weekly newsletter and social media. Our parish staff will order the arrangements on your behalf in order to coordinate with the liturgical season's colors.

This week's altar flowers are donated in loving memory of Rosa & Fued Maluf.

[Click Here to Learn More](#)

*Virtch Church*  
**ONLINE MINISTRY**





We know you might not always be around to celebrate with us. Stay connected to the parish you love and take St. Paul's with you wherever you go through Virtch Church!

Whether you're home sick, enjoying a long weekend, or just need a spiritual vacation in the middle of the workday, you can always pray with us on Virtch Church.

Join us Monday-Friday at 12:10PM, or on Sunday at 10:00AM and 5:00PM. Our masses are live-streamed to our [website](#), our [YouTube page](#), and our [Facebook page](#). In addition to these platforms, [check out our Instagram](#) to never miss what's happening at St. Paul's!



Our services, along with the readings and hymns for the day, can be found on our [SPA app](#) - you can download it by scanning the relevant QR code above! Our app also has an online "copy" you can access through your phone's browser in case you have difficult accessing it. Find it at <https://stpaulny.web4uapps.com>.



### Make a Gift to St. Paul's

As the year comes to a close, please consider donating to support the work of our church.

Your support is the primary way that we can continue to serve the people of St.

Paul's - we've put some information below about how you can give back if you are able to. Please remember that you can have your donations go directly to the ministry of your choice!

To donate online go to [stpaultheapostle.org](http://stpaultheapostle.org) and click on "Make a Donation" in the top right corner. Please remember that you can have your donations go directly to the ministry of your choice!

Or with the Faith Direct Text-TO-GIVE platform, you can text a donation to make a quick gift to help support The Church of St. Paul the Apostle.

Just text **NY539** to the number **(646) 859-1860** to enroll.



You can also find us on Venmo. Just scan the QR code above, or search for [@stpaulsnyc](https://www.venmo.com/stpaulsnyc) to donate now!

The Church of Saint Paul the Apostle | 405 West 59 Street, New York, NY 10019

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