

ST. SEBASTIAN CHURCH

373 Bon Air Road, Greenbrae, CA 415-461-0704 www.sebastian94904.com

Parish Mission Statement: The mission of St. Sebastian Parish is the salvation of souls.



25th Sunday in Ordinary Time September 21, 2025

MASS SCHEDULE

Monday - Friday: 7:00 am

Saturday: 10:30 am at The Tamalpais
for Tamalpais residents

5:00 pm Vigil

Sunday: 7:00am, 9:00 am and 11:00 am

CONFESSIONS

Wednesdays.....7:00 - 8:00 PM

Saturdays3:00 - 4:30 PM
or by appointment

ANOIDTING of the SICK

Call a Priest at the Parish Office

PARISH OFFICE HOURS

MON., WED., FRI..... 10:00 AM - 4:30 PM

PastorRev. Bill Thornton

DeaconRev. Mr. Dave Previtali

Email: DcnDave@Outlook.com

Blog (Homilies): www.DcnDave.Blogspot.com

Parish ManagerMarianne Kambur

Office Phone415-461-0704

Parish E-mail sebastian94904@yahoo.com

Parish School of Religion:

Grades K-6:

sebastian94904@yahoo.com

Confirmation Grades 7-8 Gretchen Harris:

StSebPSR@gmail.com

Parish Ministries & Groups

Adult Faith Formation / R.C.I.A.

Deacon Dave Previtali

Altar Society

Gretchen Harris

Bible Study - 10AM Sundays

In the Parish Hall
Loretta Rogers

CYO

415-461-0704

Liturgical Lay Ministries

Lectors / EMHCs / Altar Servers
Deacon Dave Previtali

Men's Club

Faith, Food, Fellowship & Service
Meets last Mon. of the Month 7-8:30PM
Deacon Dave Previtali, coordinator

Parish Council

Marian Previtali dm121281@yahoo.com

Women's Club

Parish Social & Service Events
Marian Previtali dm121281@yahoo.com

St. Vincent de Paul Conference

Works of Mercy for Needy / Poor
Meets 4th Sat. of each Month at 10am
Phil Fant, President
Stsebastian.svdp@gmail.com

MASS INTENTIONS SEPTEMBER 21-27

Sun	7AM	
	9AM	Redentor Pagtalunan
	11AM	The Parishioners of St. Sebastian
Mon	7AM	Claire Troy
Tue	7AM	Bill Wilka
Wed	7AM	Carmen Arvisu
Thurs	7AM	Vincent Ayala
Fri	7AM	Thanksgiving for adoption for Baby Luna (Living)
Sat	5PM	Sheryl Di Rodrico (Living)

PLEASE INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE IN YOUR PRAYERS:

Angela, Monte Maroevich, Mark Piatti, Sherry Willis, Salvatore, John Pardini, Nora, Steven Williamson, Diane Riordan, Donald Kuchta, Bert, Richard, Thomas T., Deacon Bill Turrentine, Dave D., Edward Garchitorena, Phyllis Johnson, Ron Murphy, Neyat Tesfay, Verna Giel, Blake Dombrowski, Kevin B., Dr. Elizabeth Rocco, Bill Crawford, Milene Meyer, Eric Maddox, Donna T., Diana M., Terry A., Marian C., Larry Marvier, Jack G., Rosa Levia, Miriama, Janet T., Maria Coronado, Vicki Evans, Connor and Braeden Harris Meringolo, Tinsley Principe, JoAnne Giovannetti, Mary Helen Pidgeon and Mike DeAngelo.

After today's readings, we can't say we have not been warned about the dangers of mixed-up priorities. God's Word is so very clear today on the necessity of putting Him first in all areas of our lives.

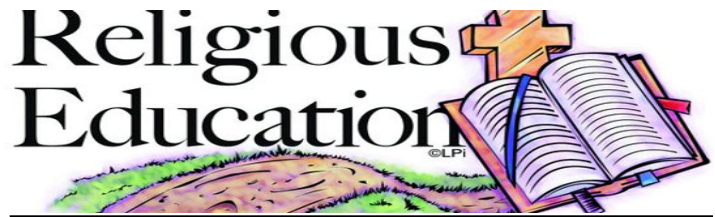
We see this in the First Reading from Amos. The Lord has harsh words for those who would take advantage of the poor and whose priorities are not aligned with God's.

In the Second Reading from St. Paul's letter to Timothy, Paul gives us the antidote to the self-centeredness condemned in our First Reading. The antidote is to imitate Christ, "who gave Himself as a ransom for all." Rather than thinking of Himself and how to "get ahead," Christ gave Himself away — completely — for our sake. That is how we are to live.

In our Gospel passage from Luke, the Lord shows us how to bridge the gap between worldly thinking and priorities and eternal thinking and priorities. Jesus tells the parable of the corrupt but clever steward who is about to be fired when the master discovers the steward has been squandering his property. Realizing his imminent unemployed status, the clever steward reaches out to the various debtors of his master to wheel and deal with them, making friends who would look out for him when he became jobless.

What if we put that kind of effort into our own tasks as good stewards of all God's gifts to us? Into our ministries, into the ways we could make more time for prayer as individuals, as couples, as families, and as a parish? What if we got as creative as the "bad steward" in the use of our finances so that we could give more generously to the poor and the advancement of God's kingdom on the earth? That's our lesson and our challenge.

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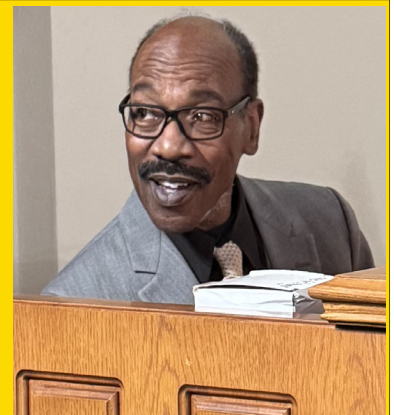
Our Parish School of Religion classes start this Wed, September 24th.

Sacrament of Confirmation preparation classes start on Wednesday, October 1st. If you are interested in religion classes for your child, please call the Parish Office at 415-461-0704 to register.

Join us for a celebration to honor our parish treasure

**ERIC
MADDOX**

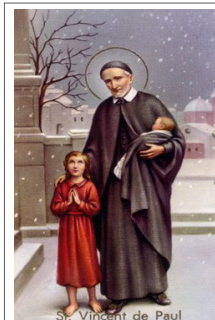
as we celebrate his
40 years
of leading
St. Sebastian in
music
on the piano and
organ for our parish



Sunday, October 12th
at the 11:00 am Mass
followed by a luncheon in the hall

All are welcome to come and shower Eric with the appreciation we have for him and his 40 years of dedication to our parish.

Please see the wonderful article
(on the following page)
honoring Eric on his 40th anniversary
written by our parishioner Lidia Pringle in this
month's edition of the Catholic San Francisco.



"Lord, help me to make time today to serve you in those who are most in need of encouragement or assistance."

—St. Vincent de Paul



THE SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

One of the "hidden gems" our parish is the Society of St. Vincent de Paul

Also known as "Vincentians" they are a small group of 5-6 parishioners who serve the needy poor within the geographical confines of our parish boundaries (Greenbrae, Kentfield and parts of San Rafael). At the cost of about \$5,000/month, the Vincentians bring hope and help to the struggling in many ways:

- They assist with medical expenses for those without sufficient health care;*
- They help pay utility bills so that basic human needs can be met.*
- They provide furniture to make an apartment into a livable home;*
- They help families attain the necessities of normal life so that both adults and children live with dignity;*
- They have helped to relocate an abused woman and her vulnerable children to another state in advance of her abuser's release from prison.*

And they are able to do these things because of YOU!

At the Masses next weekend on September 27/28 we will be observing St. Vincent de Paul Sunday with a special collection to support the good works of our parish Vincentians.

If you are donating by check, please indicate "SVdeP" on the memo line.

If you are donating cash, please use the white envelopes in the pews.

Thank you for your generosity to help those in need in our community.

*“...to serve the poor
is to go to God...”
- St. Vincent de Paul*





Friends and relatives say that master musician Eric Maddox loves to attend St. Sebastian parish celebrations where he lives out the message of Christ in love and service — and with an infectious sense of humor.

St. Sebastian's music director celebrates 40th anniversary



BY LYDIA WASSOWICZ

Award-winning journalist Wassowicz, former West Coast science editor and senior science writer for United Press International, has been writing for Catholic San Francisco since 2011.

The halls of St. Sebastian Church in Greenbrae are alive with the sound of music thanks to Eric Maddox, maverick choir director who got the job 40 years ago in response to one of 100 resumes he sent out upon arriving in San Francisco.

Over the decades, the prodigy from Detroit — described by some as a sofie, by some as a prankster and by all as a man with a heart of gold and a talent rarer than platinum — took his singers in new directions and to new locations.

From expanding the repertoire across an array of genres to traveling to France with his troupe as guests of a famed boys' choir group, the master musician has left an indelible mark in and out of church.

Equally adept at performing and directing, the self-described "pianist who plays the organ" initiated music programs in schools, introduced troubled youth to instrumentation, shared the stage with thespians, conducted elite conservatory students and provided custom-made accompaniment at birthday parties and other special events.

At 73, he continues to teach privately and entertain at an offshoot of the exclusive, all-male Bohemian Club called The Family, in addition to transforming the worship of God into a symphony of prayer and praise each Sunday.

SEPTEMBER 2025 | CATHOLIC SAN FRANCISCO

“He radiates joy through his music, either on the piano or the organ. He is such an integral part of the lives of the parishioners of St. Sebastian’s.”

MARIANNE KAMBUR, St. Sebastian parish manager

“The liturgy is the word of God, and music is the voice of God,” said Maddox, an Episcopalian who attends Grace Cathedral in San Francisco but recognizes the pontiff, having fallen in “love” with the late Pope Francis, and reveres the Blessed Mother, always parking his car by her statue outside St. Sebastian’s side entrance. “Music raises your level of involvement, heightens the spirit and is the way I communicate with God.”

Likewise, it provides an “integral aspect” of every Mass and devotion for retired professor and attorney Francisco Wong-Diaz, who met the maestro as a lector at St. Sebastian’s, which he attended from 1973 to 2002, when he moved to Menlo Park.

He remembers Maddox as a “pillar of our parish community,” remarkable for his “development, training and successful organization of our choir.”

Encouraged by an enthusiastic contingent of three dozen or so and an ample repertoire developed under his predecessors, Maddox started shuffling smaller voices into larger roles, rotating the cantor and making other modifications to “strengthen the choir (and) do beautiful liturgies.”

Parish council member and former cantor and children’s choir director Celeste Chapman lauded him for venturing beyond classical and into contemporary, gospel, chant and other styles, “exposing people to compositions and composers who are significant throughout history and in our own time.”

The longest-serving choir member, Donna Boyd, exposed to opera, concerts and dance since early childhood, considers Maddox’s contributions indispensable.

“I grew up with music all around me and can’t imagine not having it in church,” said Boyd, who joined the choir in 1980 and befriended Maddox at his debut five years later when her mother invited the lifelong bachelor to dinner.

“Right away we loved his music, and Mother, a great hostess, asked him and all the choir members to our house,” Boyd reminisced.

The familial friendship flourished, with Maddox visiting often, sharing common interests, playing her mother’s favorite tunes at her 85th birthday bash and, 12 years later, at her funeral.

Described as approachable, accomplished, amenable, charming, cheerful and charitable, Maddox heard a chorus of instant approval from the vocalists he was coaching. Among them, Janet McGarry, now 95 and retired from the troupe after 25 years, recalled wistfully how “everybody loved the choir, and we had many performances, and it was always a big deal.”

On the heels of a round of musical chairs filled by

three directors, none of whom lasted more than a year, Maddox’s entrance came “at the right time, when we needed him,” Boyd recalled.

“When he showed up, everything blossomed: he increased our repertoire, put on shows, went to retirement communities, even put on nightclub and talent shows for the parishioners,” she added.

The award-winning musician devoted many extra hours to planning and preparing for each production.

Offering gospel, classical, 20th-century and 21st-century selections, Maddox “is so gifted, he can play virtually any kind of music, and do it well,” said Chapman, who had filled in until the new director made his appearance.

“Eric’s musical experience is broad, and he’s constantly working on new programs,” Boyd said. “He doesn’t care if someone falls or forgets, never says anything unkind. He loves the musician in all of us.”

Such admirable standards have earned him high marks with the pastor and staff as well.

“I think very highly of Eric,” said Father Bill Thornton. “He is a world-class musician.”

“He radiates joy through his music, either on the piano or the organ,” added parish manager Marianne Kambur. “He is such an integral part of the lives of the parishioners of St. Sebastian’s.”

He cultivated that relationship from the start with such special treats as the 1985 and 1987 visits of the internationally acclaimed Les Petits Chanteurs (little singers) of Aix-en-Provence, France.

“I had just arrived and thought it would be a great idea to have them stay with our families and give concerts with a sacred portion and a popular portion,” Maddox recalled. “They appeared in their 16th-century robes, gave a marvelous rendition of religious music and then, in the second half, they learned ‘America the Beautiful’ for us.”

The snowed-out choir of boys ages 9 to 15, established in 1907 in Paris, wooed the parishioners as performers and won them over completely as houseguests.

Boyd kept in touch with the two boys who stayed with her, then ages 12 and 14, until they wed.

“When the two boys were in our house first came, they spoke very little English, but by the time they left some days later, they spoke plenty,” said McGarry in recalling the field trips, swim parties and ball games arranged for the visitors.

“We enjoyed it so much that a couple of years later, we decided to go to Provence to see them,” she added, noting that the 1988 excursion was her first trip to France.

Maddox, who had honed his keyboard skills in Paris, served as tour guide around the countryside between 19

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group sing-alongs, lunches and dinners with the boys and their families.

Maddox’s influence and impact have similarly touched the largely artistic membership of The Family — formed in 1901 by newspapermen protesting the Bohemian Club’s censorship — which engaged him at the same time and in similar fashion as St. Sebastian’s.

“Of all the very competent musicians we have, Eric is considered as one of the best pianists, and of all our members, he’s the most beloved,” said Richard Johns, noting that the club boasts both its own symphony orchestra and chorus.

Since landing the gig 40 years ago, in response to one of the 100 letters he had mailed, Maddox has played parts at the keyboard and on the stage in hundreds of the 50 often elaborate performances the San Francisco social club produces annually at its scenic redwood retreat in Portola Valley.

Among the standouts: the night The Family’s Songbirds chorus, which he headed for a decade, outperformed the rival Bohemian Club at a festival hosted by the bigger, older group; the day he received the coveted Ring of Appreciation for outstanding contributions; the evening he took on the role of Snow White before a crowd of 200.

“He was absolutely hilarious,” Johns said. “It was a huge hit, and he loved it.”

To help make troubled youth a success, Maddox would take a bus from his home in San Francisco, transfer in Marin, then walk a mile along the highway to reach the St. Vincent’s School for Boys property in San Rafael, recalled Boyd, a former volunteer with the Godmothers, who raise funds in support of the struggling youngsters.

The Timothy Murphy School — named after the Irish pioneer who on his deathbed in 1853 bequeathed 314 acres that developed into the St. Vincent’s campus — closed in 2019 when its lease expired.

Offered a position with the San Francisco Conservatory, Maddox had left the previous year after devoting five years to the students, many of whom lived at St. Vincent’s, a residential treatment home for “traumatized” boys ages 7 to 18.

“Often coming from abusive, broken, drug-addicted families, those boys loved Eric and the stability and discipline he provided,” Boyd said. “And he loved introducing them to piano and string instruments, taking them to rest homes to perform and seeing them blossom.”

Maddox’s own blossoms began to bud at his birth in Detroit as the first of seven children of parents with big hearts and dreams.

“I had a delightful childhood,” Maddox said. “The most important thing was that every morning Mom came into the room with a smile so we’d all smile.”

Thelma Maddox’s eternal optimism belied the adversity she had faced growing up in the South in the 1920s and 1930s.



Maddox enjoying one of many Christmas celebrations at St. Sebastian with parishioners.

“We didn’t learn about the racism my mother experienced until we were adults when our father told us,” said Winnie Maddox, the oldest of four sisters. “I have no idea how she could have been so positive with everything she experienced as a child.”

Always helping others, never gossiping, advocating in school, working at the polls and caring for ailing neighbors, her mother, who died at age 67, “was not just a housewife,” Maddox said. “I think she knew she was blessed with a good husband and family.”

Introduced to her future groom by her sister when she was 14, Thelma married Joe Maddox, a World War II veteran who loved jazz and appreciated classical music, in Detroit when they both turned 21 in 1946. Five years later, the couple welcomed Eric into their world of church and community.

The family worshipped at the Saunders Memorial AME (African Methodist Episcopal) Church, where Eric, at age 12, began directing the girls’ choir of some 15 teenagers — and attracting boys to the piano, to their parents’ delight. He remained there until his graduation from Cass Tech High School, at the time Detroit’s only magnet school, designed to attract diversity.

As brothers and sisters came along, the Maddoxes hosted

neighborhood Memorial Day parties and invited area youngsters to pick apples and cherries off their trees.

Active and aware, Thelma brought Rosa Parks — long before the civil rights icon’s international celebrity — to Pingree Elementary School, attended by all her children.

The Maddoxes also made sports and music a priority, with every sibling playing an instrument and, for a while, traveling as a family band. (Brother Paul continues as a noted jazz drummer and percussionist, touring the world under the stage name Pheeroan akLaff.)

“Eric had quite a life, starting to play piano at 4 and taking private lessons at 9,” said Winnie Maddox, who resided in the San Francisco Bay Area for 27 years before moving to Atlanta. “He was always very respected, liked and talented.”

Well versed in Motown, jazz and dance, he also excelled in track and swimming, shocking Winnie with a dive off a high cliff at the legendary Pools of Oheo during a family vacation to Hawaii in the 1990s.

“As a brother, Eric was always fun, kind and a prankster at times,” she said.

One hot, humid summer night, for example, when she was about 10 and he nearly 16, he advised her to smother her arms and legs in Vaseline to fend off hungry mosquitoes. When she complied, her mother was the only one not to laugh out loud.

On a more serious occasion, his father, a materials supervisor for Chrysler Corp. for 30 years who died in 2018 at age 93, took him to work.

“This is the only time you will come to a factory; we want something better for you,” he told me,” Maddox recalled. “He knew what high school I should go to and talked about the University of Michigan, having no idea I’d go there!”

Maddox left for Ann Arbor with a music scholarship that helped carry him through a piano performance major and French minor. As a bonus, he got his first taste of Europe, touring 13 countries with the glee club.

A mentor, impressed with his skills, arranged for him to refine them in Paris.

Upon matriculating, he followed a buddy to Southern California, where he played the organ at a Catholic church, taught grades 1 through 8 at a school run by the Sisters of Mercy and introduced a variety of music programs to both venues.

Three years later, he found his heart, hearth and home in San Francisco.

“Eric has been here for 40 years to watch families grow, to share the happiness of the sacraments and the sorrow of funerals through the beautiful music he plays,” said St. Sebastian’s Kambur. “He is truly a treasure for our parish.”

For Maddox, the treasure is music, the universal unifier. “If we have a way to learn to listen to one another as we do to a beautiful composition, we’ll be kinder and better to each other,” he said. “That’s why I have to be there to provide it.” ■