



**PARTNERS  
IN THE GOSPEL**

# **SAINT BRENDAN SAINT TERESA OF CALCUTTA P A R I S H   F A M I L Y**

**Fall 2025 NEWSLETTER**



**SAINT BRENDAN**

[WWW.PARISH.SAINTBRENDAN.ORG](http://WWW.PARISH.SAINTBRENDAN.ORG)

**SAINT TERESA OF CALCUTTA**

[WWW.SAINTERESACALCUTTA.ORG](http://WWW.SAINTERESACALCUTTA.ORG)

## **FROM OUR PASTOR**

Dear Parishioners,

As we prepare to enter into the next phase of Partners in the Gospel we begin our planning for the changes of 'Who We Want to Become' when we become one Canonical Parish. Our work, our focus is one of proclaiming the message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ for the salvation of souls. As we turn our eyes toward this next part of the process it is important that you know about the feedback we received in the first stage: "Who are we?"

When you read through this newsletter you will see feedback which summarizes the feedback that was given to us during the first stage. You will also see a section which highlights some of the misconceptions we discovered during our first listening sessions. You will find events which have taken place over the past number of months which have highlighted our parish family getting to know one another while we journey, learn, collaborate, and celebrate together as a family of faith in Christ Jesus our Lord. Finally, you will learn what the next questions are focusing on, for our next stage: "Who do we want to become?".

I can't emphasize enough the importance of plugging into this process. And am reminded of how things cannot remain as they are. Over this past year, I have noticed there is substantially less time and energy for me to spend with families who are mourning, couples preparing for marriage, staff members, visiting parishioners, availability to ministries and groups, in the school, and the Hispanic Community. A lack of being constantly present at weekend Masses has also diminished our communication which would encourage participation in events and ministries. As I've had conversations with priest in parish families throughout the archdiocese, they are encountering the same struggle. I have been a part of clusters of parishes in the past and have witnessed how

## LETTER FROM OUR PASTOR CONTINUED

communities begin dying when they are simply clustered together. This process is not one of clustering, but of change for us in our parish family. A change which can be positive and breathe new life into our parish family, but only if we embrace the work ahead of us and roll up our sleeves together.

This work is meant to free us for evangelizing, not bind us to duplicate meetings and programs and overextend the priests, staff, volunteers, and resources we have. It is pruning that brings about new life in the springtime, which is precisely what the last number of popes have called for in the Church. A new springtime. We can bring about this new springtime if we open ourselves to the way in which the Holy Spirit is moving us. It will take sacrifice on all of our parts and being intentional about our life of faith and our parishes. However, with sacrifice and intentionality comes new growth and life!

In the peace of Christ,

Fr. Wichert

### Prayer for Partners in the Gospel

Prayer Gracious God, we praise and thank you for the Catholic Church in Western Washington. We praise and thank you for the women and men who have shared the joy of the Gospel here for more than 170 years. Send your Holy Spirit upon us that we might encounter your Son anew and become more effective partners in sharing the Good News of his saving love. May our partnership in the Gospel empower us to be your missionary disciples, bringing the Good News to all, especially to those who are marginalized or hurting in any way. Give us the courage, the flexibility and the vision to renew parish life, so that the good work, begun long ago, may continue among us, and one day, be brought to completion in your Kingdom, where you live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

## OUR PARISH FAMILY IN COMMUNITY

### Tropical Night at the Knights Hall



In August, the Knights of Columbus hosted a lively Tropical Night at their Bothell Hall. The event, which had hula dancing and Hawaiian dishes, drew such a crowd that some guests enjoyed the summer sunshine from seats outside!

## OUR PARISH FAMILY IN COMMUNITY

### Father Lawrence Lew Visits St. Teresa



In times when hope fades, the Rosary has been God's instrument of hope, guiding souls to salvation, deeper friendship with Jesus, and a closer walk with God.

On July 17 we were honored to host Father Lawrence Lew at St. Teresa of Calcutta for a Mass and an awe inspiring talk on the Rosary. The event was titled "Under Mary's Mantle of Hope, the Path to a Deeper Friendship with Christ. For those of us who attended, Father Lew, the Promoter General of the Holy Rosary, who came to us all the way from the Marian Shrine in London England, gave us a grace-filled opportunity to deepen our love and devotion to the Rosary and our Mother Mary. Following the Mass and Father Lew's presentation, there was really well attended reception where Father Lew fielded questions for over an hour on the Rosary and his own conversion to Catholicism. It was truly a special event.

### IMPORTANT DATES TO NOTE

- September 28th after the St. Brendan 8AM and 10AM Masses: Knights of Columbus pancake breakfast.
- October 8th at 6:30PM: Partners in the Gospel Listening Session at St. Teresa.
- October 18th at 9:30AM: Partners in the Gospel Listening Session at St. Brendan.
- October 26th at 4PM: Speaker Jason Evert combining Purified and Gender & The Theology of Your Body at St. Brendan.
- CYO Basketball Registration is NOW open! Games start Nov. 8th. Visit [www.teamsideline.com/sites/seattlecyo/current-programs](http://www.teamsideline.com/sites/seattlecyo/current-programs)

### PARISH STEWARDSHIP

#### Time. Talent. Treasure.

Every person's finances and family situation is different. Jesus makes it clear that it matters not how much one gives, but that it is planned, calculated, at least somewhat sacrificial (see Luke 24:1-4), and not simply from what is "leftover" at the end of the month.

You can give online at <https://pushpay.com/g/saintbrendan> (STB) or at <https://pushpay.com/g/saintteresacalcutta> (STOC) or scan the QR Codes.



St. Brendan



St. Teresa

## OUR PARISH FAMILY IN COMMUNITY

The Annual St. Brendan & St. Teresa School & Parish Picnics



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The Annual St. Brendan & St. Teresa School & Parish Picnics

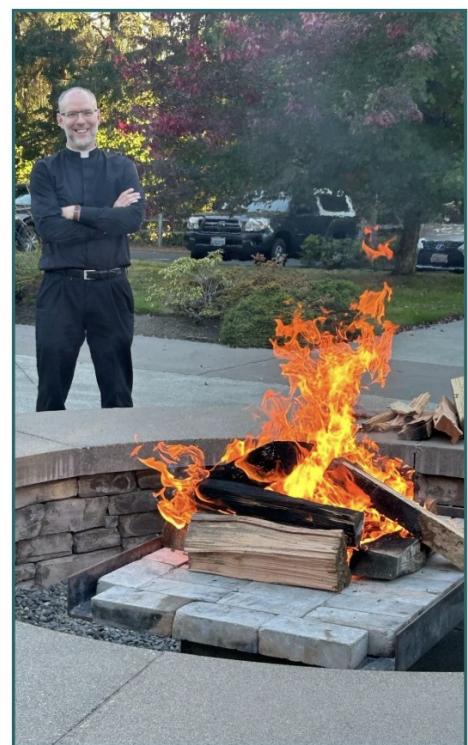


## WOMENS GROUP

The women of our parish family came together to hear guest speaker, Father Zikodi, talk about the role of women in the world as Mothers, Grandmothers, Aunts, Spiritual Mothers, etc. And the importance of his Mother in his vocation journey.



## MENS BBB SEAFOOD BOIL



## MENS BBB SEAFOOD BOIL



## SUMMER PILGRIMAGE TO ITALY

Our parish family pilgrimage to Italy included 37 parishioners from both St. Brendan and St. Teresa, as well as 4 from Cultivating Catholics, a social media presence focusing on parents teaching the faith to children. Samantha and Mark, parents to 7 children, are the ones who run Cultivating Catholics joined us and helped to plan the pilgrimage together with Trinity Tours.

Our pilgrimage was amazing, tiring, exhilarating, prayerful, full, and fun! It was great getting to know the pilgrims better, praying together, walking together through Holy Doors, experiencing the beauty of Italy and of our Catholic Faith. We experienced Sorrento, Positano, Amalfi, Capri, Pompeii, San Giovanni Rotondo, Monte Sant'Angelo, Manoppello, Lanciano, and finally Rome. As we traveled to all those places, we celebrated Mass together daily, visited beautiful churches and countryside, and grew in our understanding of our faith, the saints, and history. I carried the prayers you wrote with me, and carried you in my prayers and heart as we walked through Holy Doors and visited the places, often times, where saints walked and lived.

It was especially amazing to be able to spend time in prayer where so many of the saints have lived and are buried. And to celebrate Mass as a priest in those places with our parishioners, worshipping God, especially Mass in St. Peter's Basilica, I would rank as my second most amazing place to celebrate Mass, behind only the tomb of Jesus from our pilgrimage to the Holy Land almost three years ago.

I was blown away by the "Scavi tour" as well; this was my second time being blessed enough to be able to go on that tour. It takes you underneath St. Peter's Basilica in the excavations, which were done in the 1940s to find the bones of St. Peter which Constantine had encased so many centuries before.

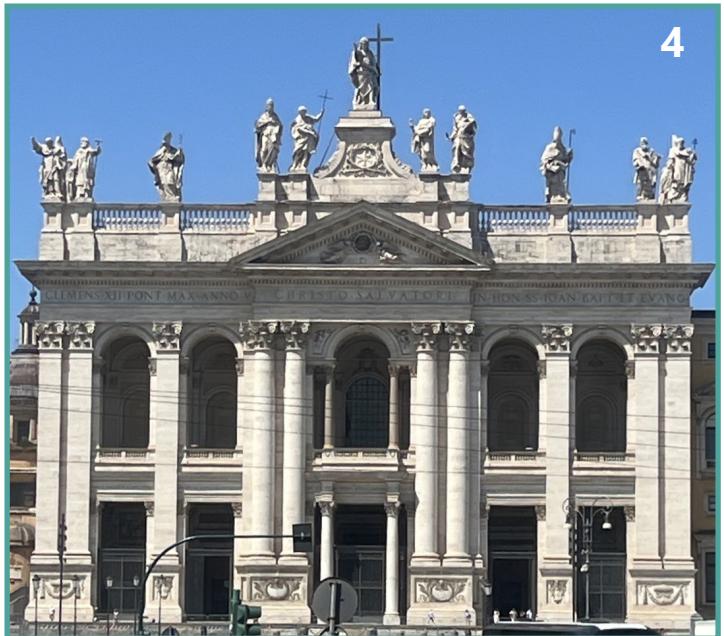
The old church where St. Padre Pio lived and worked was another highlight for me. It was amazing being able to pray there and to be in the place where he experienced so many gifts from God. And so many others experienced those gifts from God through him also. Here are some pictures from our trip.

— Fr. Wichert

\*Photo key on page 10



## SUMMER PILGRIMAGE TO ITALY



## SUMMER PILGRIMAGE TO ITALY



### Photo Key

1. Holy Spirit Window
2. Sam & Mark from Cultivating Catholics
3. Our Lady of Pompeii
4. St. John Lateran, Mother Church of all Christianity (Catholicism)
5. St. Andrew's Almalfi Selfie
6. St. Paul Outside the Walls
7. Capri
8. Rooftop in Sorrento
9. Refreshments in Capri
10. Pilgrimage Group at St. Peter Basilica



## SPRING LISTENING SESSION QUESTIONS & KEY FINDINGS

In the spring of 2025, four separate listening sessions were held to understand from our parish family 'Who are we?' The below are the questions asked as well as the responses from the attendees.

**Question 1:** What has brought you closer to God? Think about ways that your participation at our parish has brought you closer to God. In your faith life, what people and experiences assisted you in your faith journey? How did your parish bring you to a closer relationship with Jesus Christ?

**Question 2:** What challenges do you see that exist in the parish? An example could be having a large number of young adults but not having a young adult ministry.

**Question 3:** What are our parishes' strengths? What significant gifts define our faith community at St. Brendan and St. Teresa that make it stand out? If you had 30 seconds to tell a stranger in an elevator about the gifts that set our parish apart, what would you tell them first? For example, do we have a robust outreach program to feed the hungry in our faith community? Has our number of confirmandi grown year over year? Do we have a deep pool of committed volunteers for several of our ministries?

All responses were captured by our scribes anonymously throughout all of the Listening Sessions and then gathered for review by our Parish Family Advisory Council. Over the summer months, the Parish Family Advisory Council spent time reviewing all of the responses and worked together to pull out the common themes for each parish. We are happy to share the synthesized responses to each question by parish.

**Question 1:** What has brought you closer to God? Think about ways that your participation at our parish has brought you closer to God. In your faith life, what people and experiences assisted you in your faith journey? How did your parish bring you to a closer relationship with Jesus Christ?

St. Brendan Parishioner Responses	St. Teresa Parishioner Responses
The Mass/Reverence of our Masses	The Mass/Fed by the Mass and homilies
Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, the opportunity to serve others	Sense of community, small groups (bible studies, book reading groups)
Fr. Wichert's availability, spiritual direction and Homilies	Bishop Frank Schuster (then Fr. Frank)
Nocturnal Adoration, Hispanic Prayer Group	Youth Group
Exodus 90 and Fiat 90	
Availability of the Sacraments,	
One person commented that they loved that St. Brendan and St. Teresa are being brought back together as a parish family after being split apart.	

## SPRING LISTENING SESSION QUESTIONS & KEY FINDINGS CONTINUED

**Question 2:** Challenges do you see that exist in the Parish? An example could be having a large number of young adults but not having a young adult ministry.

St. Brendan Parishioner Responses	St. Teresa Parishioner Responses
Overextended Priests	
Lack of resources and ministries for young people, junior/senior high and into college	Lack of young people in attendance, ministries for them and ability to engage them
Overextended and/or lack of volunteers	Lack of volunteers and/or lack of commitment
Need for stronger communication about ministries	Not as many ministry opportunities or lack of communication about the ministries we have
Tensions around Bilingual Mass	Lack of Altar Servers
	Desire for more reverent music

**Question 3:** What are our parishes' strengths? What significant gifts define our faith community at St. Brendan and St. Teresa that make it stand out? If you have 30 seconds to tell a stranger in an elevator about the gifts that set our parish apart, what would you tell them first? For example, do we have a robust outreach program to feed the hungry in our faith community? Has our number of confirmandi grown year over year? Do we have a deep pool of committed volunteers for several of our ministries?

### Combined Responses

**Reverent and accessible Priests:** Our Priests are uniquely gifted, delivering clear biblical teaching that is Jesus centered and a 'no-nonsense' approach to the Gospel.

**A welcoming and engaged community:** Both parishes consistently praised for their welcoming and friendly atmosphere. Phrases like 'no inside clique', 'no strangers' and 'authentically Catholic experience' were used to describe the community. There is a small but dedicated core group of volunteers, in both parishes.

**Emphasis on the Mass and Eucharistic Adoration:** Several participants identified the importance of the Mass, which is the 'source and summit' of our faith, as a defining strength of the parish. Additionally, a significant number of parishioners pointed to the practice of Eucharistic Adoration as a key gift, with some noting that having daily Mass times and regular Adoration makes 'being holy easier' and is a distinguishing feature of the parish community.

**Join us for our next round of Listening Sessions:**

**October 8th, 6:30PM at St. Teresa of Calcutta**

**October 18th, 9:30AM at St. Brendan**

## SOME COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS IN THE RESPONSES

While reading through all of the responses, some common misconceptions were found and we wanted to provide some clarity.

Response	Clarification
St. Brendan was the only parish to not lose their priest.	About 50% of pasters remained in the assignment they had before Partners in the Gospel.
St. Teresa has a lack of Sunday school to help catechize the children.	St. Teresa does have Sunday school between the 9AM and 11AM Masses.
St. Brendan has a lack of evangelizing and teaching events.	St. Brendan has apologetics classes, adult education classes with Fr. Wichert every Advent and Lent; has held men's conferences for the archdiocese and hosted popular Catholic evangelizers. As well as Bible studies on Tuesday evenings, OCIA classes (which anyone can attend) to name a few.
St. Teresa has a lack of young people in attendance.	At St. Teresa, we have many young families, many however have children that are in 2nd grade or younger. But we can always grow!
St. Brendan has a youth group.	St. Brendan didn't have one, but we do now as we have joined into a parish family with St. Teresa who has two; a junior high youth group and high school youth group.

## STAGES OF PARISH PLANNING



**CURRENT STAGE 3: WHO DO WE WANT TO BECOME?  
PROPOSED START FOR THIS STAGE IS OCT.-DEC. 2025,  
WITH AN ANTICIPATED DURATION OF 6-9 MONTHS**

A critical component of this process is prayerful consideration of four separate questions and an additional commitment to listen well to each other, and together, to what the Holy Spirit is calling the parish family to embrace in the future. This process is rooted in discernment, which is always the work of the Holy Spirit and not the advancing of a particular agenda.

Central to the work of coming together as one parish is embracing the co-responsibility everyone shares for the life of the church, a responsibility rooted in our common baptism. Co-responsibility in parish life means embracing the responsibility everyone shares: clergy, volunteers, lay leaders and ministers in the mission of the church.

**Who do we want to become?**

This question will identify who the parish family is today, what the parish family is doing well, how well the parish family will respond to the opportunities and challenges identified, and how the Holy Spirit is calling the parishioners to serve as missionary disciples. Together the parish family, through consultations, will prayerfully listen to how the Holy Spirit is calling the parish family to live out the call of Matthew 28.

In the upcoming listening session, we will work through a few deep questions, one of which we are sharing below,

- “what new ministries and/or programs do we want to start, or what existing ministries should we expand to fulfill our vision of who we want to become? What existing ministries may God be calling us reconsider or leave behind? Is there anything we should stop doing or say “no” to so that we may say “yes” to new ministries?”

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**October 8th, 6:30PM at St. Teresa of Calcutta**

**October 18th, 9:30AM at St. Brendan**



**SAINT BRENDAN  
SAINT TERESA OF CALCUTTA  
P A R I S H F A M I L Y**

JOIN US OCTOBER 26TH!



Let's come together to discover the beauty of God's plan for human love. A life-changing event for teens & adults (ages 13+).



**EVENT INCLUDES:**

Eucharistic Adoration  
Sacrament of Reconciliation  
Free resources for every attendee!  
**Tickets \$25**

**October 26 | 4:00 PM - 8:15 PM**

## Why Attend Purified?

Get answers to life's tough questions about love, dating, and relationships from internationally acclaimed speaker Jason Evert and leave with a healthy sense of self-worth and the ability, if needed, to start again.

Purified brings parents and teens together to discover God's plan for love and opens up an opportunity to continue the discussion about this important topic at home with resources that work. The event includes a talk from Jason where he mixes humor with down-to-earth practicality, making the difficult conversations about love much easier, and ends with Adoration, praise and worship, and an opportunity for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, transforming the night into a mini-retreat for the whole family.

Scan QR code for tickets and info



## MAY 16TH, 2026 — ST. BRENDAN & ST. TERESA ARE BRINGING THE EUCHARISTIC CONGRESS TO THE PNW!

In partnership with six Parish Families from the Eastside Deanery, we invite you to join us on May 16, 2026 for a very special day of worship, praise, and spiritual renewal focused on the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist at the Meydenbauer Center in Bellevue, WA.

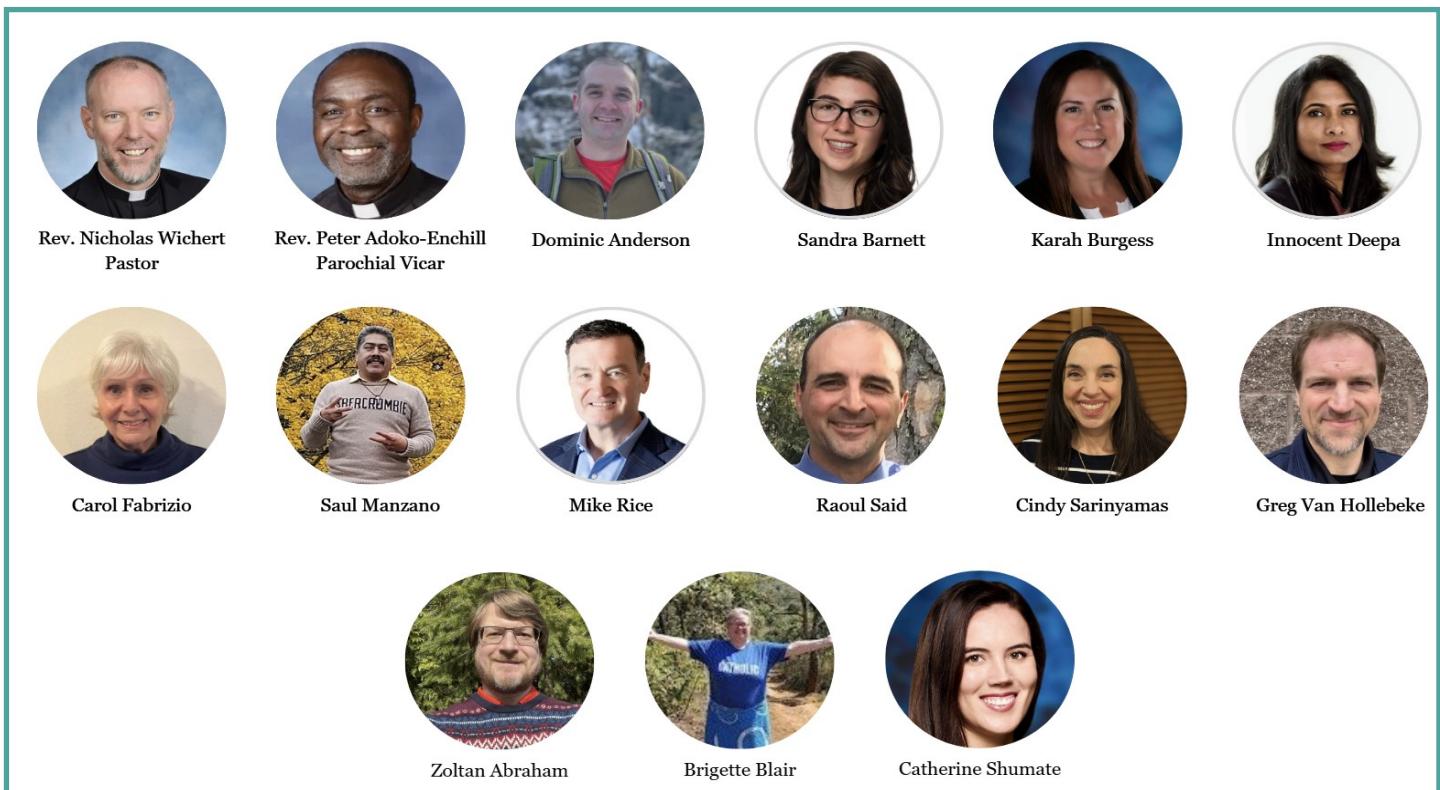
Join us in order to:

- Grow in our understanding of the True Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist.
- Be encouraged in our ability to cooperate with God's grace by answering our baptismal call to share the good news of Christ with at least one other person. This will be modeled on the 'Walk with One' program from the National Eucharistic Congress.
- Experience Guest speakers who will help enkindle a fire for our faith. Including: Chris Stefanick, Dr. Tim Gray, Andy & Sarah Swafford and Deacon Charlie Echeverry.
- Encounter incredible music that moves the soul.

Volunteers are needed to make this event a success - Seven committees have been formed to divide up and complete the prep work, day of event tasks and post-event work. These include: Logistics and Operations, Food and Beverages, Liturgical, Youth Outreach, Event Execution, Marketing and Communications, and Emergency and Security. We need your help. Please email [volunteer@ascendeucharisticrevival.church](mailto:volunteer@ascendeucharisticrevival.church) to let us know you can pitch in.

## MEET YOUR PARISH FAMILY ADVISORY COUNCIL

Father Wichert has created a Parish Family Advisory Council to serve as the primary consultative body for the strategic pastoral plan and the formation of the new canonical parish.



### The role of the Parish Family Advisory Council:

- This group will be the pastor's go-to group to consult about all Partners in the Gospel questions, including changes that impact the parish family, shared events, collaboration across parishes, etc.
- Primary focus on the health of the entire parish family, looking beyond the needs of each individual community.
- Leading our Parish community through the Listening Sessions
- Responsible for the creation of the strategic pastoral plan called One Parish Plan that will be submitted to the Archbishop prior to becoming on canonical parish.
- Ensure that the necessary discernment processes are in place for the completion of the strategic pastoral plan. The group should represent the ethnic, cultural, and economic makeup for the new parish family.
- Schools and their ministries should also be considered as part of the Parish Family Advisory Council.

For more information about Partners in the Gospel, please visit: <https://archseattle.org/partners/>

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425.483.9400

Saint Teresa of Calcutta Parish  
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