

BLESS ME FATHER

Written by

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INT. CHRIST THE ASSUMPTION PARISH, ALTAR - DAY

FATHER THEODORE SALMAN aka Father Teddy (58) stands behind a wooden cross podium giving the homily for Sunday Mass.

FATHER TEDDY

We gather here today, on this beautiful Sunday morning to learn, from Luke's gospel, what kind of 'homie' Jesus was.

The uninspired CONGREGATION settles in for what will be another boring homily from a man who thinks he's far cooler than he actually is.

EXT. THE POACHED EGG - DAY

The local brunch spot. Outdoor patio. JEFF (25) and JONATHAN (26) clinking Bloody Marys. WAITSTAFF joyfully take orders and deliver food.

FATHER TEDDY (O.S.)

Our character is what we have forever. We should go forth serving our community and not divorce papers.

EXT. SOCCER FIELD - DAY

Excited CHILDREN chase one soccer ball as their competitive PARENTS *cheer nonsensical sports phrases*. The whistle blows for the game to begin as the COACHES pray for patience.

FATHER TEDDY (O.S.)

We must look up to those who fight for what is right. Jesus wasn't just a guy with a flawless hair, a perfect jaw line, and ripped muscles. He loved every person he met and gave his life for them.

EXT. 5K CANCER RUN, FINISH LINE - DAY

RUNNERS cross a finish line pounding fists and high-fiving. They baptize themselves with water and hug their FAMILIES.

FATHER TEDDY (O.S.)

My wife Mary was the most sincere person I have ever met.

(MORE)

FATHER TEDDY (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I know I bring her up all the time,
but I want to share the wisdom and
faith she gave to me with you.

Father Teddy chokes up a little.

INT. CHRIST THE ASSUMPTION PARISH, PEWS - DAY

..And there are only a handful of PARISHIONERS in the pews even fewer endeared by his sentiment. CRYSTAL CALDWELL (74), the town bully with white hair, a huge ego, and wearing a power pant suit rolls her eyes in the front row.

FATHER TEDDY

I know you all love a tangent Mary story, so lean in. I can't believe it's been 4 weeks and I still haven't told it. Our oldest was--

A pair of PARISHIONERS pull out a deck of cards. Another empties a bag of puzzles pieces onto the pew.

INT. CHRIST THE ASSUMPTION, SACRISTY - DAY

BISHOP PETER DIDONO (70), short, stocky, and droll sits behind a desk.

Father Teddy and his out-of-shape, makes-everyone-laugh best friend, DEACON ASHER DENTIN (65) are deep in *post sermon analysis* when they enter, surprised to see the Bishop.

ASHER

Run! It's the police!

FATHER TEDDY

(laughing)

Bishop Didono we were was wondering where you went after Mass.

BISHOP DIDONO

(unamused)

I'm so proud of what you said out there today. You really are exactly the kind of man this parish needed.

ASHER

You can always count on Father T to give a fun and entertaining monologue about his dead wife.. Okay I can see I'm not wanted. Bye!

Asher exits, but remains on the other side of the door listening intently.

BISHOP DIDONO

Listen Father..This isn't easy for me, so I'm not going to beat around a burning bush. As an organization we are closing down *Assumption Parish*.

FATHER TEDDY

No you can't! The attendance is going up, it's doubled in the 14 weeks I've started!

BISHOP DIDONO

Going from 20 people to 40 is not the type of change we needed, Father.

FATHER TEDDY

This community is my everything now. It's all I have left. You can't take that away from me.

BISHOP DIDONO

You can still practice. We are going to be merging you with *Paul the IV* in Wellington.

FATHER TEDDY

What? Wellington?! My congregation won't follow me that far! Plus, we hate the Wellington Whalers. You have to know that!

ASHER (O.S.)

Go Ducks!

Didono and Teddy look to the door.

BISHOP DIDONO

I'm sorry Father. You need a miracle at this point. I'll be back around Mother's Day. And unless you have a Virgin Mary sighting we must commence with the merging process.

Didno says nothing and apologetically opens the door to exit. When he opens the door Asher falls in and lands on the floor.

ASHER

Umm..umm.Sorry Bishop.

Didono exits.

ASHER (CONT'D)
I'll pray for a solution. My
prayers solve everything! The Ducks
almost won last week!

Teddy sluggishly walks over to his desk sulking.

EXT. CHRIST THE ASSUMPTION, PARKING LOT - DAY

MRS. Caldwell intentionally waiting for the Bishop creeps out from behind her car trying to make it look serendipitous.

MRS. CALDWELL
Bishop. Bishop. You came to start a
merge haven't you. I heard from my
friends at Wellington.

BISHOP DIDONO
I'm sorry, MRS. Caldwell. I'm not
here to discuss these matters with
the congregation.

MRS. CALDWELL
Well, I think we're doing fine.
It's Father Theodore that's the
problem.

BISHOP DIDONO
That's no way to speak of your--

MRS. CALDWELL
He isn't connecting people to the
Lord. He just talks about his wife,
for the entire homily..each week!

SAMANTHA SALMAN (22), the black sheep sister, vaping, in
ripped jeans, heavy makeup and ANDREA SALMAN (25), the
perfect sister, wears a skirt, bites into post-mass-apple.

ANDREA
Hi, MRS. Caldwell? It's great to
meet you. My father says *the most
wonderful things* about you.

MRS. CALDWELL
Well, that's surprising.

SAMANTHA

It is, isn't it. No, but really Bishop, we wanted to let you know my Father speaks so highly of you, and was thrilled you were in attendance today.

ANDREA

He promised us brunch if we came.

MRS. CALDWELL

See what I mean? His children don't honor the Lord. Being forced to come to Mass and in those outfits.

SAMANTHA

Excuse me? These jeans cost more than your car.

MRS. CALDWELL

You should come by the clothing drive for clothes without holes.

BISHOP DIDONO

MRS. Caldwell, that is no way to speak to our youth.

MRS. CALDWELL

(To Andrea)

And what are you wearing?

ANDREA

A Hilfiger skirt suit. No different than yours, ma'am.

MRS. CALDWELL

I don't care who it is. I can see so much skin! It's inappropriate.

ANDREA

Your abrasive attitude is inappropriate.

MRS. CALDWELL

And your father's inability to lead is ruining our parish.

SAMANTHA

Your gross hummus face and conservative rules made folks leave in the first place!

BISHOP DIDONO

That's enough. Please. Girls why don't you head out?

ANDREA

Our apologies, Bishop. But also, we're women.

Andrea and Samantha walk to their car and pull away.

BISHOP DIDONO

MRS. Caldwell you need to be a leader in this community too. I don't know if Father Teddy's homilies are perfect, but your attitude certainly doesn't help.

MRS. CALDWELL

I'm sorry, sir. I got carried away.

Bishop gets into his car and drives off.

INT. SALMAN HOME, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Asher, Samantha, and Father Teddy ponder solutions as they dine.

ASHER

We could burn down Wellington's church?

FATHER TEDDY

We need actual ideas, Asher. Like a festival. Everyone is out doing those things on Sundays.. what if we just make Mass into a carnival?

SAMANTHA

My band would play a festival!

Andrea enters after getting off the phone. The room falls quiet, something's wrong.

ANDREA

Dad, I have a pretty big ask.

ASHER

If he can't make it happen, I will.

ANDREA

Jeff and Jonathan's venue and minister canceled on them when they found out they were gay.

FATHER TEDDY

I was excited for their wedding! I love those two like sons.

SAMANTHA

That's our conservative world for ya!

ANDREA

Dad, do you think I could officiate the wedding, maybe in the church hall?

SAMANTHA

Yes! My band could play. Dad, we'd shred so hard! Let us play!

ASHER

Slow down Hendrix. Ted, you can't have a gay wedding in the hall.

FATHER TEDDY

No. I can't but I can do one better. Let's have the wedding in the church. Sam, you can play in the hall. But only Ricky Martin and Melissa Etheridge. (BEAT) And Diana Ross. (Singing) "I'm coming out.."

ASHER

Woah! Teddy you can't. I'm serious.

FATHER TEDDY

We need a miracle. Maybe this is the way, Ash.

ANDREA

Dad..you could lose everything.

FATHER TEDDY

I'm already about to. I'll even officiate.

SAMANTHA

What? Dad? Are you serious?! What if that old-camel-toe finds out?

FATHER TEDDY

Asher can you distract her with some phony festival or bake sale?

ASHER

Jesus, Teddy. (BEAT) Yeah. Okay..

FATHER TEDDY

I'll call Jeff and Jon with the plan.

Teddy exits the kitchen on the phone. The group looks around at one another amazed.

INT. CHRIST THE ASSUMPTION, RECEPTION OFFICE - DAY

MRS. Caldwell sips coffee from a mug lined with red lipstick. Asher sits uncomfortably across from her on a stool.

MRS. CALDWELL

I have no interest in turning my church into a Fun Fair.

ASHER

Please MRS. Caldwell. If not a bake sale, or a festival, then what?

MRS. CALDWELL

You know what I want.

ASHER

I'm not a Soprano. I'm not gonna kill my best friend.

MRS. CALDWELL

Unbelievable. You're only back here because you're trying to relive your college glory days with Teddy?

ASHER

Well yeah. I feel like I have friends when I'm here.

MRS. CALDWELL

This place is not a fraternity Mr. Heister.

ASHER

It's a community here.

(sarcastically)

I need a place where I can play flip cup and beer pong.

MRS. CALDWELL

I'm not laughing Mr. Heister. This is a place to worship the lord and give purpose to those in the community who have lost it.

ASHER

Ohh so you can use the church to cure your boredom. That's not fair!

MRS. CALDWELL

I am giving my life to the church in support of it. You want to make it a simple Chuck-E-Cheese.

ASHER

We would never. Ball pits are dirty and gross. We are trying to make this place exciting again.

MRS. Caldwell stands towering over Asher who stumbles out of the stool when he looks up at her.

MRS. CALDWELL

I'm not interested in helping Theodore succeed.

ASHER

It's Father Theodore.

Asher storms out like a child.

EXT. FLOWER SHOP - DAY

Father Teddy stands admiring all the flowers when Jeff and Jonathan arrive holding hands. Both men are cleanly dressed in matching black pants, white shirts and black ties.

JEFF

Mr. Salman! You devil! We could not be more grateful.

Jeff showers Father Teddy with hugs and kisses

FATHER TEDDY

I'm happy to help you two.
(smelling the flowers)
Mary and I had baby's breath and lilies at our wedding. Aren't they wonderful?

JONATHAN

Beautiful, Mr. Salman. We are going with white roses and orchids.

JEFF

The gayest of the flowers.

FATHER TEDDY

White roses? I'm not so sure the purity of that will work in the church. You know, considering.

JONATHAN

Oh, well we've already placed the order. Honestly, we have everything taken care of.

JEFF

Yeah, we just told our catering--

FATHER TEDDY

Catering, what are the dining options?

JONATHAN

Our menu is set. Sausage Ravioli in a Bolognese or zucchini boats.

FATHER TEDDY

Have you considered doing a fish option at all? I know a great place that can cater for large groups.

JEFF

Mr. Salman, it'd be dope to have OUR wedding in your church.

JONATHAN

I think what Jeff is trying to say is that since the wedding is so close maybe it's just easiest to keep the details the same.

Father Teddy gingerly sits down on a bench. Overwhelmed. Jeff and Jon kneel in front of him.

FATHER TEDDY

I just want your aesthetic to look as heterosexual as possible. Do you know what I mean?

JONATHAN

I'm sorry sir? What do you think a gay wedding looks like?

FATHER TEDDY

It looks like sausage, zucchini, and orchids. Men all over the Alter. Skinny suits. Fresh haircuts. Not that that's bad, it's just "gay."

JEFF

Woah, Ted-man, you struggling with this being a gay wedding?

FATHER TEDDY

It's Father Teddy, now!

JONATHAN

Sorry.. Father Teddy. The girls are in the bridal party. They'll be standing right up there with you.

FATHER TEDDY

Of course, I'm so happy my daughters are independent thinkers. I need to be going.

Father Teddy begins a *Hail Mary* and runs off leaving Jeff and Jonathan dumbfounded.

INT. CHRIST THE ASSUMPTION, RECEPTION OFFICE - DAY

MRS. Caldwell is polishing bingo balls and putting them back into the basket. Asher bursts in with plastic eggs.

ASHER

What if EVERY Sunday we have a hunt for the kids? You know Eggs on Easter, crosses on Good Friday, Ashes for Ash Wednesday.

MRS. CALDWELL

You want kids seeking ashes?

ASHER

If you were in charge, what would you do?

MRS. CALDWELL

I would start by actually preaching about unity, forgiveness, you know something that Bishop Didono wants happening here.

ASHER

So then you need to hear someone preach it in order for you to practice it?

MRS. CALDWELL

Out Asher!

Asher exits.

INT. SALMAN HOME, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Samantha practice *The Bridal March* on the guitar as Andrea watches *Say Yes to the Dress*.

Father Teddy barrels into the living room from the front door.

FATHER TEDDY

It's off! The Wedding is off!

SAMANTHA

Woah, Dad? Take some chill pills!

FATHER TEDDY

The flowers, the food, the everything!

ANDREA

Relax, slow down, and tell us what's going on.

FATHER TEDDY

(whispering)

They're gay. Like Broadway, scarves, high voices gay.

SAMANTHA

(whispering)

Ewww, all that and they have sex with each other.

FATHER TEDDY

I'm not kidding, Samantha Ashley. I'm not okay with this.

ANDREA

Dad. You're just having cold feet. You love Jeff and John. You've know them their whole lives.

FATHER TEDDY

Yeah, but I didn't know them as these 'Nancies'.

Father Teddy sits down, Samantha pours him some red wine. Dips her fingers in the glass then blesses him with it.

SAMANTHA

Let your ignorance be gone! Be gone!

FATHER TEDDY

Samantha, stop it!

ANDREA

Dad! You can't call them Nancies.

FATHER TEDDY

Nancy, really - we always called the fairies in our school Nancies.

SAMANTHA

DAD! Fairies is not okay! They're gay, call them gay and when you do don't whisper it like a weirdo.

ANDREA

Dad, you're being insane. They're the same kids you knew as they were growing up. They're just happy and in love now.

FATHER TEDDY

I can't keep up with all this. I know they didn't choose to be this way. I'm just having a hard time choosing to help them.

ANDREA

Do you remember the week before you got married to Mom?

SAMANTHA

No, not this story again!

Samantha does the sign of the cross then chugs a full glass of red wine.

FATHER TEDDY

(relaxing)

Yes, I've never been so sure of anything in my entire life.

ANDREA

That's how they feel. And they need your help right now. They trust you to be a a part of this.

SAMANTHA

I mean, think about it Dad. It's like you're getting married all over again.

ANDREA

This marriage marks the beginning of a new life for you. You're a changed man after you do this. A God among men!

FATHER TEDDY

Your Mother would divorce me right now if she knew what I was doing.

SAMANTHA

So that makes Mom a hypocrite?

FATHER TEDDY

Do not say that about your Mother!

SAMANTHA

Church doesn't believe in divorce but you don't seem to mind Asher?

ANDREA

Dad, Mom wasn't perfect. Neither is the Church. This is your chance to make a difference.

FATHER TEDDY

Stop pressuring me to change the Church. I'm only one person!

SAMANTHA

Would Jesus have said that, Dad?

Father Teddy sulks out as Randy Fenoli of *Say Yes to the Dress* says, "No! He Wouldn't!"

INT. CHRIST THE ASSUMPTION, SACRISTY - DAY

Asher fondles bingo balls as Father Teddy skims through *Men's Health*. There is awkward tension in the room.

ASHER

Okay. Okay. Okay. I believe you. You can't just become a homo. Can we please stop now.

FATHER TEDDY

(closing the magazine)

Yes. I don't know how else we can save the church.

ASHER

This wedding is a crazy solution anyway. What if they steal all our candle sticks?

FATHER TEDDY

Or do Karaoke with our microphones?

ASHER

Exactly. See you know this is a bad idea.

FATHER TEDDY

These guys didn't have a choice, Asher. I do. I have a choice to do the right thing.

ASHER

Exactly! So write an inspirational homily about unity, forgiveness you know something that Bishop Didono wants to hear.

FATHER TEDDY

You're on Caldwell's side now?

ASHER

No, I feel like the Bishop listens to her. Lets make her happy and buy ourselves time. We should be playing it safe right now.

FATHER TEDDY

You're not helping. We should be turning to the Bible to look for answers.

Father teddy genuflects as he grabs The Bible, then aggressively flips through the thin pages, ripping some.

ASHER

Ted! Relax. You're struggling with this idea because it's a BAD idea! Reading about Adam and Eve for the 100th time isn't --

FATHER TEDDY

It could have been Adam and Jeeves, right?

ASHER

What? No. Its Adam and Steve?

FATHER TEDDY

No it's Jeeves. Butler's named Jeeves are always gay.

ASHER

Well I overlooked that.. but still No. You can't do this.

FATHER TEDDY

Look I already lost my wife. I
can't lose my daughters too.
They're counting on me. Maybe it's
time for me to let the church go.

ASHER

This isn't just your Church, Teddy.
It's not always about you. Think
about everyone else for once?

FATHER TEDDY

There are so many gays and I'm
thinking about all of them too. Not
just Jeff and John.

ASHER

So what we are going to be the
black market of gay weddings? I
don't want to risk losing
everything I worked so hard for.

FATHER TEDDY

Since when did you get all high-and-
mighty? Last Easter you played
Edward 40-hands with two bottles of
red wine.

ASHER

It was the Blood of Christ!

FATHER TEDDY

You pissed in the tabernacle!

Beat.

ASHER

I'm sorry. I'm not high-and-mighty.
I just don't want everything to
change again. We just got our bro-
mance back, bro!

FATHER TEDDY

I don't understand it all yet,
either Ash. But I trust the girls--
women. I think the world might need
this change.

ASHER

So it's the blind leading the
blind?

The two embrace and huge hug.

AHSER

No homo.

Father Teddy's phone rings: Incoming Call from 'Jeff and John'

FATHER TEDDY

Can you please distract Caldwell?

ASHER

I mean I can try. You know she's the embodiment of Satan on earth right?

Teddy picks up the phone and exits as Asher continues to ramble.

EXT. FARMER'S MARKET - DAY

The Market is filled with Mother's Day decorations and decor.

MRS. Caldwell is carrying a basket of loaves when she spots Asher handing out flyers in the center of the market.

MRS. CALDWELL

We had an agreement, Asher. You aren't to bother me on my Saturday off.

ASHER

How would I ever know that you shopped in a dirt ridden place?

MRS. CALDWELL

Local tastes better and..I can afford it.

ASHER

And speaking of our finances I think you'll be happy to know what Theodore and I have cooked up.

Asher distributes a flyer to Caldwell.

ASHER (CONT'D)

A motivational, uplifting, and inspirational evening at the church! Beef and red wine style.

MRS. CALDWELL

And I'm just to believe this? I get he's a great speaker, but I've heard it all already.

ASHER

Right! I straight up told Teddy he's got to knock off that Mary-speak. Then I beat him in a game of Rummy to seal the deal.

MRS. CALDWELL

A child's card game is not going to convince me his moral compass has changed. That man let me down. I have just as much invested in him as you do.

ASHER

Can you please help me pass these out? We are going to show this town Teddy is the right man for the job!

MRS. CALDWELL

Sure, I'll bring the masses and watch a place I worked tirelessly to build fall a part as he reminisces about the deceased.

ASHER

He's past all that stuff about his wife. Would you please help me spread the good word?
(yelling to the market)
The Ted-man is hear to stay! Grab a flyer, change your life!

MRS. CALDWELL

That's no way to attract parishioners to our church

ASHER

Oh dear! I'm sorry. What would you recommend I do?

MRS. CALDWELL

Give me those. I'm running errands all over town today anyway. I'll make sure the place is packed this evening.

ASHER

Happy Mother's Day, MRS. Caldwell.

Caldwell waddles off carrying her groceries and the flyers.

MONTAGE

EXT. POACHED EGG - DAY

PATRONS gracefully accept Caldwell's flyers *celebrate* her good work and *cheers their bloody Mary's* as she walks away.

INT. SALMAN HOME, KITCHEN

Andrea helps Jeff get into his tuxedo. She's wearing a white gown and voices *positive graces* about the handsome man in front of her.

EXT. SOCCER FIELD - DAY

SPECTATORS huddle around Caldwell and listen to her pitch as they wait for their CHILDREN to cross the field.

INT. CHRIST THE ASSUMPTION, SACRISTY

Samantha helps Jonathan attach his orchid boutonniere. She's in a non-traditional white dress and shouts *endearing insults* to get him loosened up.

EXT. ANOTHER 5K CANCER RACE - DAY

RUNNERS drenched in sweat look up inspired by Caldwell's flyer and agree to grace the evening with their presence.

END MONTAGE

INT. CHRIST THE ASSUMPTION, PEWS - DAY

Father Teddy is praying a rosary. Asher approaches, genuflects, and sits beside his friend.

ASHER

I need you to do a beef and wine event that ends with some kind of *Braveheart* speech next week.

FATHER TEDDY

Wonderful, just pile on the pressure.

ASHER

Right now Caldwell is all over town passing out flyers to an event your hosting. We're appeasing everyone.

FATHER TEDDY

Yeah, except our heavenly father
who is rolling in his grave.

ASHER

Come on bud, you know he rose out
of that grave, don't be dramatic.

FATHER TEDDY

Weddings always make me nervous.
Joining two peoples lives together
for eternity. That's a lot of
pressure.

ASHER

I mean, if you look at it that way.
Doesn't even matter their gay,
right?

Asher gets up, genuflects and exits. WEDDING GUESTS enter the church and *get affirmation from Asher* that they're in the right place.

Father Teddy rises, genuflects and exits behind the alter in the front.

INT. CHRIST THE ASSUMPTION, SACRISTY - DAY

The grooms phallically pop bottles of champagne in front of a Jesus statue. Andrea looks out the window and sees groups of TOWNSPEOPLE walking toward the church.

ANDREA

I thought you said it was only a
200 person wedding?

JEFF

It is--

JONATHAN

I wanted more. Sadly I don't have
bigger numbers in my entourage.

Samantha enters the sacristy with a guitar around her neck.

SAMANTHA

We're ready to start?

A MAN (45) enters behind Samantha holding a flyer.

MAN

The beef and wine thing? That at
the church or hall?

SAMANTHA

Who the hell are you?

More and more people start piling into the church lobby behind Samantha as Andrea reads the flyer.

ANDREA

The Hall - It's in the hall.

JONATHAN

(looking out window)

Maybe I do have an entourage!

SAMANTHA

Hello people -- THE WEDDING IS STARTING.

JONATHAN

That's my cue! Hey Babe, don't mess this up for me.

Jonathan exits smiling.

JEFF

Oh my god. I'm getting married.

Jeff faints. He's caught by his groomsmen who hold him in a crucifixion pose.

ANDREA

Fix him.

Andrea exits.

INT. CHRIST THE ASSUMPTION, OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Andrea enters in a rush with the flyer. Asher is fanning Father Teddy.

ANDREA

Dad, you're double booked tonight. 100 people just showed up for a beef and wine.

ASHER

What? No that's not until next weekend. The 25th.

FATHER TEDDY

Today's the 25th, Asher!

ASHER

No. Look.

Asher points to a calendar on his desk.

FATHER TEDDY
Asher! This is from 2011!

ASHER
Ohhh..

FATHER TEDDY
We need to cancel this wedding.
Asap.

ANDREA
No, they are headed to the hall. We
just need to do the wedding
quickly. Can you do your fast
wedding?

FATHER TEDDY
No - If I'm doing this I'm doing a
proper Catholic wedding. It'll take
at least 65 minutes.

ANDREA
You have 5. Figure it out.

EXT. CHRIST THE ASSUMPTION, PARKING LOT - DAY

MRS. Caldwell catches up to Bishop Didono who is walking with
the townspeople from the church to the hall.

MRS. CALDWELL
Bishop! Bishop! I did not expect
you would come to such an event!

BISHOP DIDONO
I got back to town early, saw the
flyer and thought I'll support you
all try and turn things around.

MRS. CALDWELL
I wanted there to be a crowd. That
way I would win either way. If he
fails he fails big and that's a win
for me too.

BISHOP DIDONO
Mrs. Caldwell, I appreciate your
work in creating such an event, but
we should pray for positive results
always.

The two cross the threshold to the hall.

MONTAGE

INT. CHRIST THE ASSUMPTION, ALTER

Asher and Father Teddy enter from the side of the alter. There is an *uproarious cheers*. He blesses the crowd.

INT. CHRIST THE ASSUMPTION, SACRISTY

Jeff rises to his feet. His GROOMSMAN give *encouraging and supportive advice* to Jeff. They exit to the Sacristy door.

INT. CHRIST THE ASSUMPTION, HALL

Mrs. Caldwell gathers the attention of a murmuring CROWD.

MRS. CALDWELL

There's been a mistake. The event
will take place in the church.
Please follow me.

The crowd follows Mrs. Caldwell out.

INT. CHRIST THE ASSUMPTION, PEWS

Samantha plays *What a Wonderful World* on her guitar walking down the alter. Jonathan follows behind her and high fives his friends and family.

The line of groomsman follow Jonathan down the aisle. Everyone reaches the alter.

INT. CHRIST THE ASSUMPTION, PARKING LOT

Mrs. Caldwell, Bishop Didono, and the townspeople cross the parking lot.

INT. CHRIST THE ASSUMPTION, PEWS

Samantha and the band start playing the *Wedding March* and Jeff walks down the aisle as all the wedding guests stand.

END MONTAGE

INT. CHRIST THE ASSUMPTION, ALTER

Andrea hugs her father and *whispers praises* into his ear. He smiles and welcomes Jeff and Jonathan to the alter.

FATHER TEDDY

Against my better judgment I am
about to perform the fastest
marriage ceremony of all time.

The wedding guests laugh and *shout praises* to the priest.

FATHER TEDDY (CONT'D)

Since it is your intention to enter
the covenant of Holy Matrimony,
join your right hands, and declare
your consent before God and his
Church.

Jeff and Jonathan join their right hands.

FATHER TEDDY (CONT'D)

Jeff, please repeat after
me...I, Jeff, take you,
Jonathan, to be my husband. I
promise to be faithful to
you, in good times and in
bad. In sickness and in
health, to love and to honor
you all the days of my life.

JEFF

I, Jeff, take you, Jonathan,
to be my husband. I promise
to be faithful to you, in
good times and in bad. In
sickness and in health, to
love and to honor you all the
days of my life.

FATHER TEDDY

Jonathan, please repeat after
me...I, Jonathan, take you,
Jeff, to be my husband.

JONATHAN

I, Jonathan, take you, Jeff,
to be my husband.

INT. CHRIST THE ASSUMPTION, LOBBY

Mrs. Caldwell looks to Bishop Didono confused. She tries to open the door but it's locked. They both jiggle and then listen to the sounds coming from within the church.

INT. CHRIST THE ASSUMPTION, ALTER

FATHER TEDDY

Bless, O Lord, the rings they've
laid upon one another. Lord I vow
to you Jeff and Jonathan will give
to each other and pour over them
the abundance of your good gifts. I
know pronounce you Husband and Wi--
Husband!

The wedding guests abrupt in a cheers and praise. The back doors of the church burst open. Mrs Caldwell.. And the townspeople enter.

MRS. CALDWELL

Theodore!? What is this? There were no weddings planned today.

FATHER TEDDY

It's not a wedding, it's the beef and wine event. Please everyone welcome. Have a seat, we are just getting ready to begin.

INT. CHRIST THE ASSUMPTION, PEWS

Bishop Didono watches delightfully as groups of strangers introduce themselves to one another as they file into seats.

The wedding guests *explain the events of the day* to laughing and smiling townspeople.

Mrs. Caldwell gives Father Teddy a deathly stare as he begins to speak behind the podium.

FATHER TEDDY

It's okay to do the wrong thing if it's for the right reasons. Evaluate your choices, your past, your present, and your future and make the choices you want to make to be the person you want to be...

INT. CHRIST THE ASSUMPTION, SACRISTY

Asher, Bishop Didono, and Teddy chat about the events of the day with Mrs. Caldwell.

BISHOP DIDONO

I'm not sure why there was so much chaos here today, but it brought a smile to my heart. Thank you.

FATHER TEDDY

I'm sorry, Bishop - I honestly did not expect for you to stop by this event.

BISHOP DIDONO

Clearly -- sadly one event like this doesn't really give me any leeway with the big guys.

(MORE)

BISHOP DIDONO (CONT'D)

We can chat more this week about options for Assumption.

A knock on the door. Asher gets up to open the door.

CONGREGATION MEMBER 1

There wasn't a basket passed around during the event. I wanted to donate.

They put a \$5 dollar bill down on Teddy's desk and exits. In an homage to *Rudy* wedding guests and townspeople enter putting whatever cash they have in a pile on the desk.

CONGREGATION MEMBER 2

Father, your actions and your words inspired me today, I'll see you at mass this week.

The line continues.

CONGREGATION MEMBER 3

Father. You made the world a better place today. I'd listen to you in podcast form.

These mini lines of gratitude continue on for a long while until the end of the line is reached. Asher gets up and shuts the door.

ASHER

I told you he had more in him than just Mary stories.

MRS. CALDWELL

That hag continued to drag you down even after death. I'm not convinced that's all that happened here today.

ASHER

I dare you to say a nice thing. Double. Dog. Dare. You.

BISHOP DIDONO

That's enough. Ted, you made a believer out of me. Not sure what this miracle was, but if it happens but maybe it bought you more time.

ASHER

Looks like we won this battle, Caldwell.

BISHOP DIDONO

If we can keep another church open,
we all win.

ASHER

Well yeah. That too.

MRS. CALDWELL

I know something happened here
today and I'll get to the bottom of
it.

Caldwell looks out the window and sees Jeff and Jonathan
taking pictures with Andrea and Samantha.

MRS. CALDWELL (CONT'D)

I'm going to go mingle the grounds
a bit more -- see what the energy
is out there.

Caldwell and Bishop Didono exit.

ASHER

Well how are you going to keep this
up!? The town doesn't have infinite
gays.

FATHER TEDDY

No but the church has infinite
problems.

Father Teddy grabs a picture of his wife and puts it in a
drawer.

ASHER

She'd be proud of you, bud.

EXT. CHRIST THE ASSUMPTION, PARKING LOT

Mrs. Caldwell approaches Andrea, Samantha, Jeff, and
Jonathan.

CUT TO BLACK