



# The Parish Press

Newsletter of Saint Raphael Parish Family  
Milford, Connecticut

April 2020



## OUR CHURCH IN A STAY SAFE, STAY HOME ERA

The Church throughout the world has changed drastically since the advent of the coronavirus outbreak. I was on my pastoral visit to Vietnam when we first started hearing about this disease. By the time of my return home on February 6, airports were crowded with people wearing protective masks. Passengers from China were being screened separately. Here in the United States, we watched from a distant shore as we hoped and prayed the virus would not come here. But it did.

March 17 marked a turning point for us as a parish, and a diocese. It was the day that Mass with a congregation ceased to be a regular event. Our Archbishop made the difficult but necessary decision to suspend all public weekday and weekend Masses. The Archbishop at that time assured the people of our diocese that priests would be saying a private Mass each day in the parish remembering in prayer all those who are affected by the pandemic. I have been faithful to that promise since then.

In 38 years of priesthood I have never once said a Mass without at least one other person present. Let me tell you, it is very eerily strange. To say, "The Lord be with you," and not hear a response is unnerving. The Mass is meant to be a communal experience. It is a dialogue between the priest and the people he leads in worship. In fact, Canon Law states, "Except for a just and reasonable cause, a priest is not to celebrate the eucharistic sacrifice without the participation of at least some member of the faithful." (c.906)

We are certain that this pandemic most definitely is a just and reasonable cause. We do not know when this practice will come to an end. At the time of my writing this (Laetare Sunday – Fourth Sunday of Lent) we still are uncertain about what our Holy Week and Easter celebrations will look like. Rest assured, Mass is being said for your intentions every single day as together we face the uncertainty of the future.

Blessings to all.

*Father John*

## About the April Newsletter

In this time of uncertainty please be aware that the schedule of events covered this month could, and probably will, change at any moment. (Be sure to read Father John's column, at left.) We are writing in March. Our entries are based on the latest information from the parish calendar for April. *The Parish Press Staff*

## What's on the Calendar

### Stations of the Cross

Friday, April 3

7:00 pm

Mary's Way of the Cross  
Saint Gabriel Church

Walk with Mary, the Mother of Jesus,, as she follows her beloved Son from his condemnation to his execution. Feel her overwhelming sorrow as his body is placed in her arms. Share her tears as he is placed in the tomb, then rejoice as he is raised from the dead.

(The *Mary's Way of the Cross* pamphlet is available online Go to [http://littlesistersofthepoor.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Mary\\_Way\\_of\\_the\\_Cross\\_e.pdf](http://littlesistersofthepoor.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Mary_Way_of_the_Cross_e.pdf))

The summit and culmination of the entire Liturgical Year is the Easter Triduum, from the evening of Holy Thursday to the evening of Easter Sunday. Chronologically three days, liturgically they are one day, one celebration. Triduum is when time stands still, when "The kingdom of God enters into our time" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1168).

The Triduum liturgy will be celebrated this year at Saint Ann Church and will include the traditional procession, transfer of the Blessed Sacrament to the altar of repose and Adoration.

## Blessing of Easter Food Holy Saturday at Noon

Deacon George will preside at the blessing of the Easter food on Holy Saturday at noon at Saint Ann Church, continuing a cherished, centuries-old tradition.

## Easter Sunday Masses

Easter Sunday Masses will be offered at Saint Gabriel Church at 8 and 11 am, at Saint Ann Church at 9:30 am.

### The God of Love Is A God Of Action

Spring Into Scripture

Thursday, April 16, 7:00 pm

Saturday, April 18, 10:00 am

Saint Ann Parish Library

Our God is a God of action. Join us for *Spring Into Scripture* and see God at work: creating, blessing, speaking, forgiving, crowning, relenting, redeeming.

Our God is an awesome God!

## Easter Triduum

April 9

### Holy Thursday

Mass of the Lord's Supper  
7:00 pm

April 10

### Good Friday

Celebration of  
the Lord's Passion  
3:00 pm

April 11

### Holy Saturday

The Easter Vigil  
8:00 pm



- Trish Black
- Kathleen Buchanan
- Cathy Coda
- Paula Demirjam
- Ann Eden\*
- Tom Jagodzinski\*
- Rose Marie Marmolejo
- Albert May
- Pat Pavlucik\*
- Lou Servideo\*
- Richard Wheeling
- Tom Zawislinski

\*Term expires in May

## Pastoral Council Selection Process Underway Submit Nominations by Sunday, April 19

The annual Pastoral Council selection process has begun. As their terms expire at the end of May, four current members (see box at left) will be leaving the Council, creating vacancies for us to fill.

Membership on the Council is determined by *nomination* (your part) then *selection*. Between now and April 19 please think carefully and prayerfully about parishioners (at least 18 years of age) who would serve the parish well as Council members. You could be that person. If so, don't hesitate to nominate yourself.

The Pastoral Council assists the pastor in pastoral planning, developing pastoral programs, improving pastoral services and evaluating the effectiveness of various programs and services within the parish.

Nomination forms will be in the bulletin the weekend of April 4/5. Fill one out and drop it into one of the Nomination Boxes at the doors of each church. Deadline for nominations is Sunday, April 19.

*Selection* of new members will take place during the Council's May 18 meeting. After a prayer for God's guidance the names of the final nominees will be placed in a vessel. The four names drawn by lot will be the new members, who will serve terms of three (3) years. (Read in Acts 1:15-26 how Matthias was chosen by lot to take the place of Judas among the Twelve.)

Pastoral Council meetings are open to parishioners, who are welcome to attend as observers. The Council will meet again on Monday, April 27 at 7 PM in the Saint Ann Parish Center library.



## An Invitation to the Class of 2020

The parish invites you to be part of our annual Graduation Celebration on Sunday, June 7. This is an "All Class of 2020" invitation, for grade school, high school and college graduates. Please come with your families and friends and let the parish salute you.

Canceled classes, social distancing, remote learning, no team sports (or tournaments) - it's been a strange time, for sure. The Class of 2020 at all levels shares a most unlikely and unwelcome bond. All the more reason to come together for this special event.

The celebration will begin with the 9:30 am Mass at Saint Ann Church, followed by a brunch and dessert reception in the Parish Center Hall.

Look for your formal invitation this month, and mark your calendars. Hope to see you in June!

### From Our Social Justice Subcommittee: "Clean Slate Bill" Would Help Ex-Offenders Stay Out of Jail

Under proposed Senate Bill 403, currently under consideration by the CT State Legislature, certain criminal records – for misdemeanors and nonviolent felonies – would be expunged for individuals who have completed their sentences and have had no other convictions for seven years. By eliminating the stigma of having a criminal record, the so-called "Clean Slate Bill" would give these ex-offenders greater access to jobs and housing.

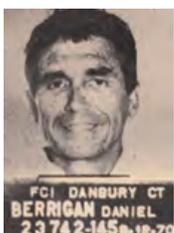
Studies have shown a) that finding a job is one of biggest factors in an ex-offender's ability to stay out of jail and b) that ex-offenders who "stay clean" for several years are far less likely to commit a crime than first-time offenders. Yet ex-offenders are often turned down for jobs and housing even years after completing their sentences. (Note: Clean Slate would **not** include those convicted of serious crimes such as sexual assault, homicide and child endangerment.)

The proposal has broad support within the Legislature and is a top legislative priority of Governor Ned Lamont and of CONECT: Congregations Organized for a New Connecticut, a collective of churches (including Saint Raphael), and other religious and civic organizations from New Haven and Fairfield counties. Also backing the measure are the Connecticut Police Chiefs Association, the Connecticut Corrections Commissioner and the state Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection. For more information about Senate Bill 403 and/or CONECT, contact Matt McDermott ([matt.mcd9@gmail.com](mailto:matt.mcd9@gmail.com)), CONECT's Lead Organizer.

### A Social Justice Meditation

"We want the peace; but most of us do not want to pay the price of peace. We still dream of a peace that has no cost attached. We want peace, but we live content with poverty and injustice and racism, with the despair of the poor to whom justice is endlessly denied. We long for peace, but we wish also to keep undisturbed a social fabric of privilege and power that controls the economic misery of two thirds of the world's people."

*Father Daniel Berrigan*



Father Daniel Berrigan was a highly controversial Jesuit priest who, with his brother, Father Joseph Berrigan, was a leader in the anti-war movement of the 1960s and 1970s. A pacifist, he remained active in the peace movement until his death in 2016 at age 94. Considered by some an anarchist and traitor and by others a saint, Father Berrigan served time in federal prison for acts of civil disobedience that included destruction of draft board records and protests at military sites such as the submarine base in Groton. A prolific writer and poet, he often meditated on "the burden of trying to do the right thing, regardless of the near certainty that it would make no difference." What made such a burden bearable, he said, was a difficult yet disciplined belief in God as the key to survival and sanity.



## GIFT's March Topic Moves to April: New Life in Christ

### Easter Vigil, Easter Sunday, Easter Season

Like so many other events, the March GIFT sessions were canceled, then rescheduled for April. The new dates are posted at right. The material below might seem familiar - it appeared in the March issue. Updated information for our Sacramental Programs is in the larger box, lower left.

Friday, April 24  
6:00 - 8:30 pm  
Sunday, April 26  
12 noon - 2:30 pm  
Saint Ann  
Parish Center Hall

The resurrection of Jesus is central to our Catholic faith. "I am the resurrection and the life," Jesus tells Martha in John's Gospel (11:25) and everything we believe is based on his triumph over death. When we gather to "grow in faith together" at GIFT this month we'll discuss the significance and the importance of Jesus' resurrection. We'll see the many ways in which we can live the experience of the risen Christ. These include prayer, the sacraments, service to those in need and the example of a Catholic life. We'll also look at the beautiful liturgy of the Easter Vigil and discover why the season of our Easter Alleluias extends for 50 days, until Pentecost.

### GIFT Sacramental Program Schedule

**First Communion, Session #3**  
Saturday, April 18, 10 am - 12 noon  
Session includes church/sacristy tour  
and review of Communion Rite  
Saint Ann Children's Chapel

**Learning and Praying the Rosary**  
Tuesday, April 21, 6:15 pm  
Children will gather in two Parish  
Center classrooms to *learn* how to  
pray the Rosary. Then they will walk  
to Saint Ann Church together to *pray*  
the Rosary with the parish's  
Rosary Prayer Group.

Both events above are required for  
First Communion children with a  
parent or guardian.

**Confirmation**  
Sunday, April 19, 12 noon - 1:30 pm  
*Catholic Social Teaching*  
Session begins with pizza.  
Required for candidates.  
Saint Ann Parish Center

This uplifting and informative GIFT session is required for both First Communion children and Confirmation candidates with a parent or guardian. Please be with us on either Friday or Sunday. We can tell from the Gospel stories that Jesus always enjoyed dining with friends. GIFT continues that tradition: every session begins with a catered meal.

We'll distribute take-home packets at the close of this month's sessions with information about April's original GIFT topic, *Living as Disciples*. Read through the materials, please, and discover how each of us, in our own unique way, can live our everyday lives as disciples of Jesus. He calls us with two simple words, "Follow me." Our "yes" leads to a path that is both life-changing and profound.

### Congratulations . . .

. . . to these parish young people who recently received the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time: **Alexandra Arago** (December 19), **Andrew Kotansky** (December 21), **Caroline Marchand** and **Zachary Santos** (January 4) and **Jaxon Betso** (March 14). Remember always how much God loves you.

### A Reminder As We End our Lenten Journey

It's April and our Lenten journey draws to a close. March has been a time of great uncertainty, and, we hope, a time of increased prayer. But we may have been distracted from some of our Lenten goals, especially fasting (sacrifice) and almsgiving.



Preparing meatless meals as part of our Friday abstinence is a great Lenten activity for families, offering an experience of global solidarity without ever needing to leave the kitchen! Through small daily sacrifices like giving up coffee, candy and ice cream, for example, we make room for God to act in our lives in new ways. If we put the money we save into our CRS Rice Bowls we are giving alms to the most needy. Our almsgiving has the power to transform the world.

CRS Rice Bowls are available at the doors of both churches (Don't have one? Simply use an envelope.) No donation is too small. You can return your donations at our April GIFT sessions or by dropping them in the collection basket in an envelope marked *CRS Rice Bowl*. (Please make checks payable to Saint Raphael Parish.) CRS Rice Bowl donations help to alleviate poverty and hunger around the world. 25% of your donations remain in the Hartford Archdiocese. Thank you for your unfailing generosity. Questions? Contact Maria at [atomasetti@snet.net](mailto:atomasetti@snet.net) or 203-988-8598.



**Summer VBS Camp 2020**  
July 20-24, Saint Ann Campus  
Contact Maria (as above)  
for details.

### Churches Open for Quiet and Personal Prayer During This Difficult Time

#### Saint Ann Church

Monday through Sunday - 10am to 4pm

#### Saint Gabriel Church

Monday, Wednesday, Friday & Sunday - Noon to 4pm

Tuesday & Thursday - 8am to Noon

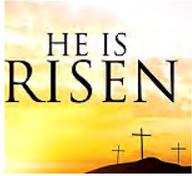
Saturday - 10:30am to 2:30pm

### Receive Parish Information /Updates Via Email

To be sure you're receiving updated parish information, please submit your email address - if you haven't done so already - to [parishpress06460@gmail.com](mailto:parishpress06460@gmail.com).

## The Uncertainty of April

“What’s coming up this month” - the usual content of this space - has an aura of uncertainty this issue. As a result of the COVID 19 pandemic “What’s happening in April” may not be happening in April. Events are listed in black and white, with some colorful graphics, too, but some of them could be delayed, postponed or canceled altogether. Please check before you make final plans.



One thing is certain. Easter will come, “the greatest of all Sundays,” and we will rejoice as we celebrate our Lord’s resurrection from the dead.

In the words of the priest as he lights the paschal candle from the new fire on Holy Saturday, “May the light of Christ rising in glory dispel the darkness of our hearts and minds.” Happy Easter.

### ***The Parish Press***

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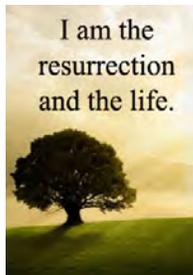
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***The Lord is risen! Let the earth rejoice!***

### **In Memoriam**

Saint Raphael’s mourns the recent loss of

George Lippard	Henry Christensen, Jr.
Helen M. Andersen	Shirley Davenport
Lois Buynak	Theresa Manno
Pam Ferris	Jeanne Morrell
Angelo Vitti	Francis “Zach” Swan
Stephen Saja	Betty Morse



May they rejoice forever in God’s kingdom of light, happiness and peace.

### **Bereavement Support Meeting Sunday, April 5**



The parish Bereavement Support group will meet on Sunday, April 5 at 2:00 pm in the Saint Ann Children’s Chapel. If you are struggling because of the loss of someone you love we invite you to be with us.

Come share your story and ease your pain, even for an hour. Let us help you remember that life can be beautiful. You may call Joanne (203-877-4020) for additional information.

### **Parish Press Info Due April 10**

Please submit news, notes, comments and photos for the May edition of *The Parish Press* by Wednesday, April 10.

Send them to [parishpress06460@gmail.com](mailto:parishpress06460@gmail.com) or call Ann Eden (203-874-8744). Thank you!

### **We Welcome With Love . . .**

the newest member of our parish family,

Luke A. Putnam

who was baptized on Sunday, February 16 at Saint Ann Church. God’s warmest blessings on you, Luke, and on your family.



**Father Steve**

### **Holy Week Reflections with Father Steve Krugel Canceled**

In keeping with directives from Archbishop Blair and mandates from Governor Ned Lamont and in the interest of public safety we have canceled Father Krugel’s highly anticipated Holy Week reflection *From Crying “Hosanna” to Crying “Crucify Him,”* which had been scheduled for April 1.

### **Additional Calendar Updates**

**GIFT 1st Communion Program  
April 2 Last Supper Prayer Service/Dinner  
CANCELED**

**Pork Roast Dinner in Support of HomeFront  
Original Date: Sunday, April 19  
Rescheduled. New Date: To Be Decided**

**Home Front 1-Day Repair Blitz  
Original Date: Saturday, May 2  
Rescheduled. New Date: To Be Decided**