



The Parish Press

Newsletter of Saint Raphael Parish Family

Milford, Connecticut

June 2020



Because of the Coronavirus pandemic our parish has not had the opportunity to come together for any kind of function, either worship or a social gathering, for two months now. This is a very difficult situation in that we feel a sad sense of disconnect from those we are used to seeing week after week. Personally, I miss seeing all your faces and observing your reactions as I preach my homilies. I long for the opportunity to chat with you after Mass once again and catch up on family news. But most of all I miss sharing Eucharist with you all.

As I write this, the Pastoral Council members and a group of volunteers are preparing to call every registered parishioner by telephone. The primary purpose of this initiative is to reach out in person to every parish family. It has been quite some time since we've been in touch with you.

The secondary purpose is to update some important information for the future. We realize that some of our records are severely out of date, or that essential contact information is missing.

The people making the calls will identify themselves as representatives of Saint Raphael Parish. I am not exactly sure when the calls will begin, but please be receptive when you are contacted.

I continue to offer a private Mass seven days a week, and all Mass intentions are being honored. If you wish to offer Mass for your intention(s), please contact Monica in the parish office (203.874.0634).

Blessings to all.
Father John

Miss **SCRIP** ??

Scrip cards, for personal shopping and gift giving are still available. You can use them locally and online. Added bonus: Every Scrip card purchase helps to support the parish.

Call Pat Dumas, our dedicated Scrip program coordinator, to place your order and arrange to pick up your cards. Reach Pat at 203-878-2774.

Memorable May Moments

Familiar events from a different perspective have become a hallmark of the current crisis. We go to Mass at home, via Zoom. Birthday parties have become parades. Family visits are virtual. The May happenings described below were also different this year.

32nd Annual Mayor's Youth Awards

Congratulations to Saint Raphael Parish Nominees!

Thirteen parish young people were recognized during what Mayor Ben Blake called a "special edition" of the Mayor's Youth Awards on Thursday, May 7. The city's 32nd annual presentation went out at 5:00 pm on the Milford City Hall Facebook page. The mayor "had never been to a virtual awards ceremony" but stressed how important it is to acknowledge the contributions of the young people who had been nominated, the "everyday heroes who make our community proud."

This year's Saint Raphael nominees, from Grades 4 through 11, are all active parishioners who have demonstrated ongoing faithful service in our parish community, and, in the case of some of our teens, even beyond.

They have served in a number and variety of different parish ministries. The impressive list includes: Altar Server, Teens for Service, Summer VBS Camp, Winter Family Fun Night, GIFT Faith Formation (activity helpers), HomeFront 2019, Christmas Giving Program, Beth-El Center Evening Dinner Team, Coffee And, Parish Tag Sale and Christmas Fair, Backpacks for Education, Health Care Facility sing-a-long and strolling music visits, Mighty Mites, and Super Bowl of Caring.

Thank you, nominees, for your willingness to serve! Your active participation is both an example and a blessing for our Saint Raphael Parish family.

And (drum roll) the nominees are . . .

- Abbey Candelora*
- Michael Deveny*
- Julian Ekeh*
- Jenna Hanson*
- Camille Irby*
- Misai Lam*
- Allyza Moral*
- Arthur Moral*
- Austin Moral*
- Deven Rivera*
- Alina Rodriguez*
- Eira Rodriguez*
- Moira Staples*

Honoring Mary During May

On Mother's Day weekend, in a brief ceremony filled with quiet reverence, Michele Croteau crowned Our Blessed Mother, Queen of Heaven and Earth. On Sunday, May 24 we honored Mary with a Zoom Meeting prayer service with hymns, prayers, petitions and the Biblical account of the Annunciation (Luke 1:26-38). We heard again Mary's beautiful fiat, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word."



"What is greater than the Mother of God? What more glorious than she whom Glory Itself chose?" (Saint Ambrose of Milan)

A Special Birthday Photo



On April 25 Ann Frisbie, beloved long-time parishioner, celebrated her 105th birthday. Joining her for the festivities were great-granddaughters Hailey (left), who is almost 2, and Aurora, who is 5. Lovely photo, Mrs. Frisbie. May God bless you always.

Solemnities (Major Feasts) on the June Calendar

Trinity Sunday
June 7

Corpus Christi
Sunday, June 14

The Most Sacred Heart of Jesus
Friday, June 19

The Nativity of Saint John the Baptist
Wednesday, June 24

**Feast of Saint Peter
and Saint Paul**
Monday, June 29



Father Allen

Father Charles Allen, S.J., Retires from Fairfield University

Father Charles Allen, S.J., popular retreat speaker and faithful friend of Saint Raphael Parish, has retired from Fairfield University and Fairfield Prep, where he had been “integral to the life and spirit of the community.” He will leave Fairfield for the Champion Center (aka Weston College) in Massachusetts, “where I started out some 40+ years ago.” Father wanted to retire “while his mind is still sound” and he can read, reflect and maybe start writing.

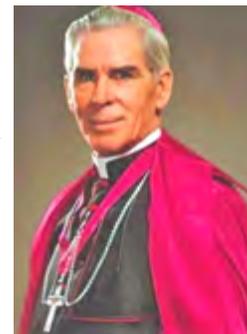
Saint Raphael parishioners remember Father especially for his Lenten reflections, deeply spiritual and spiced with delicious Irish wit. Some 600 vehicles wound through the university’s campus on May 5 to provide a great sendoff for a well-loved priest. Our fondest wishes go with you, Father. God bless.

A Social Justice Meditation

“It is a tenet of the Catholic philosophy of charity that the lessening of the ills of mankind and the diminution of the traces of disease are not ends in themselves, but rather means to an end. In other words, philanthropy is not absolute in its end, but sacramental. . . In the broad sense of the term, everything in the world is a sacrament, for everything in the world can be made a means of leading us on to Christ and hastening the reign of Christ.”

Fulton J. Sheen

Fulton John Sheen (1895-1979) was an American bishop/archbishop and renowned theologian, known for his preaching and especially his work on television and radio. Due to his contribution to televised preaching, Sheen is often referred to as one of the first televangelists. His cause for canonization is awaiting final action by the Vatican



Fulton J. Sheen

What Have You Been Doing During Stay Home Stay Safe? Some Responses from Pastoral Council Members

The *Parish Press* staff got to wondering: What fun/interesting/different things have people been doing during Stay Home Stay Safe? Why not ask the esteemed members of our Pastoral Council? Here’s what they had to say.

Lou and Ann Servideo caught up on yard work, stocked up on pool supplies (hoping the pool will open this season!). Lou did a lot of reading and has some recommendations: Ted Widmer’s *Lincoln on the Verge* and Jeff Shaara’s Pearl Harbor novel *To Wake the Giant*. Ann’s been helping with granddaughters Molly and Mandy’s home schooling and serving as gatekeeper for Sunday’s 9:30 Mass. She’s also been working on a 500-piece puzzle. Was it fun? The jury’s still out.

Paula Demirjian organized her painting studio (“It took me weeks”), read 6 books - she “highly recommends.” *Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens - and “tackled the Old Testament.” Her most productive effort was a Rotary project. Because wearing masks for 8-12 hour shifts was “wreaking havoc on healthcare workers’ ears” Paula and 2 other Rotarians sewed buttons on 600+ headbands. Wear the headbands, attach the mask’s elastics to the buttons and “Voila! Saves the ears.” Paula Zooms with friends and has social distance visits with her grandkids (“Can’t wait to hug and kiss them!!”) She closed her response with “I wanna GO OUT TO EAT!!!!”

Trish Black read the Bible, watched Daily Mass and the Rosary on tv and was faithful to the parish Sunday Mass via Zoom. She planted a small garden, did some interior painting, met with friends and co-workers using Zoom. Trish also baked a chocolate cake and made some chocolate chip cookies. Yum!

Tom Jagodzinski kept working on a months-long project: “sorting and arranging 20,000 pictures that I’ve taken over the decades and putting together 40 photo books of special events and places we’ve visited.” Ambitious! He figures he’s “about a third done.”

Perhaps the most thought-provoking response came from Deacon George. He and his wife Monica have continued their Marriage Preparation sessions with engaged couples, meeting over the phone now instead of in person. “The dynamic is quite different. Since we can’t see each other’s facial expressions or body language as we discuss different topics” it’s important to “express ourselves carefully in words. All in all, we move forward, trying to help couples prepare for their lives together as a married couple in the Church.”



Exploring Options for Our Rainforest Explorers

Our hardworking VBS planning team, with input from families with children ages 4 through 10, continues to explore all options for a modified VBS camp this year. Possibilities currently on the drawing board are listed below.

* Two 3-day camps during the week of July 20 or August 10. This option would allow us to reduce the number of campers to meet gathering restrictions and social distancing guidelines.

* One 5-day camp the week of July 20 or August 10. This option would depend on the number of families with children who express interest in an in-person camp.

* Combination of virtual and family activity camp. What might this look like? Virtual opening assembly, Bible stories, and music & dance via Zoom? Family game activities? Videos for in-home arts & crafts? Porch drop-offs for music CD/DVD and other camp giveaways?

Given the uncertainty at press time, we are very much in exploration mode. It's too soon to make a final decision. Health and safety remain our first priorities, so information/guidelines from the Archdiocese of Hartford and the Department of Public Health will allow us to complete our exploration and finalize our plans.

For questions or additional information, please contact Maria Tomasetti, atomasetti@snet.net or 203-988-8598 (voice or text).

Campers Explore Bible Stories to Learn More About God

Week 1: God rescues Noah
God keeps his promises.

Week 2: God gives the Commandments
My loving God gives direction.

Week 3: Jesus calls his disciples
Jesus is with me.

Week 4: Jesus heals ten lepers
Jesus is full of healing.

Week 5: Jesus visits his disciples
Jesus helps me share his Good News.

Pentecost Celebration

As we were going to press, GIFT families were receiving email party packs. Tucked into each they found craft projects, a prayer service, activities, and a short video, ideal resources for a celebration of Pentecost.

Celebrating the Feast of Pentecost is an excellent way to help our young people - and all of us - to recognize the power of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the original disciples and in our lives as well. *Come, Holy Spirit!*



2020 Graduation Celebration Will Go On!

Although we can't yet make final plans for the 2020 Graduation Celebration, we know one thing for certain: The celebration will go on! We cannot miss the opportunity to recognize and celebrate this year's Saint Raphael's grade 8, high school, and college graduates.

As reported last month, the celebration has been moved from its original June date to Saturday, July 18. Festivities will begin with the 4 o'clock Vigil Mass and continue with a pizza, pasta, and dessert reception in the Saint Ann Parish Center Hall for the graduates, their families and friends.

If July 18 doesn't work because of ongoing public health restrictions, we have a backup date: Sunday, August 16. We'll begin with the 11:00 am Mass at Saint Gabriel, then gather in Saint Gabriel's Church Hall for the reception.

This is a moveable feast! If restrictions prevent us from saluting our graduates in person on August 16, we'll move to cyberspace for a virtual prayer service and celebration some time that day. (If that happens we'll deliver a balloon - actual, not virtual! - to each graduate.) All graduates will be recognized in *The Parish Press* and the weekly bulletin.

Please contact Maria Tomasetti (as above) by June 15 with the graduate's information, including plans for next year (high school, college, work, or the military). A photo of the graduate would be great, too - cap and gown not required. Don't worry about the actual date. We'll be in touch.

Congratulations, Class of 2020! Go with God's blessings as you begin a new chapter in your lives.

GIFT

Sacramental Program Updates First Communion

Tour of Church and the Sacristy Review of Communion Rite at Mass Between June 22 and June 30



The tour/review program is on deck for our First Communion families, that's for sure. The format (virtual or in-person) and the exact dates and times will depend on health and safety considerations, including any late June limits on the size of group gatherings.

Even if in-person tours are possible we will offer two date/time options for a virtual format. It's a 2-hour program, whether in-person or virtual.

Planning through the uncertainty of COVID-19 is challenging. Thank you for your patience. Questions? Please call Maria, as above.

In the June Issue: A Friend Retires, Fulton Sheen, A Special Birthday

Read about the upcoming (or perhaps ongoing) parish communication initiative in Father John's article and beam with pride for the Mayor's Youth Award nominees. Event dates are still uncertain, but we have plans and contingencies!



June is the month of the Sacred Heart. In 1899 Pope Leo XIII dedicated the whole Catholic world to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. We can turn in confidence to the Sacred Heart and ask for mercy during this pandemic.

Happy Father's Day to all parish dads. May God bless our fathers, grandfathers, godfathers, stepfathers and foster fathers. May their day be as special for them as they are to us.

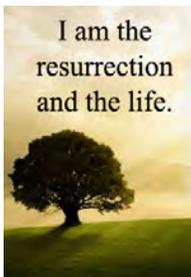
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In Memoriam



I am the
resurrection
and the life.

Saint Raphael's mourns the recent loss of
Gus Betso II Kevin James O'Rourke
Marietta Ladra Barbara Ann Savage
Mary Ann Acker Elaine Buksar
Albert Sunman William Sean Wing
Patricia Soulier Helen Gloria Inzitari
Constantino Andy DiStefano
And all those who have succumbed
to the coronavirus

May Christ, our Good Shepherd, lead them to the joy of everlasting life.

Reach Out to Our Bereavement Support Group



If you are struggling because of the loss of a loved one during this strange and difficult time, we encourage you to reach out to our Bereavement Support group. We are not yet able to meet with you physically, but we are simply a phone call away.

Share your story and let our sympathy and concern ease your pain, if only for a while. You can reach us 203-877-4020. May God bless you always.

Join the Saint Raphael Parish Press Google Group

Benefits to "parishioners in the know": you'll receive *The Parish Press* online (usually a bit earlier than USPS delivery) and the latest parish information and updates will be delivered straight to your inbox. Signing on is simple: send your name, address and preferred email to parishpress06460@gmail.com. Thank you.

Submit Parish Press Info By Friday, June 12

Please send your news, notes, stories, photos - whatever you'd like to share with the parish family in our July newsletter - to parishpress06460@gmail.com by Friday, June 12. Or, you may call Ann Eden (203-874-8744). Thanks very much. We'd love to hear from you.

Men of Saint Joseph

The Men of Saint Joseph have been practicing social distancing during the Covid-19 pandemic, conducting their regular Tuesday meetings via Zoom. But as of Tuesday, May 26th, following Governor Ned Lamont's guidelines for reopening, the group began gathering again at Saint Gabriel's Hall.



Their meetings will continue to air via Zoom, a kindness for those who might still be apprehensive about in-person sessions and an opportunity for other men at Saint Raphael to get to know them and "consider praying with us through these dire times."

The Zoom Meeting ID is 687 180 8712. No password is required.

The Men of St. Joseph is an association of Christian men, united under the Catholic Church. The Saint Raphael chapter has been meeting weekly since 2016 to pray together and encourage each other to be the spiritual leaders of their families. To join the group or to learn more you may call John Marmolejo at 203-375-2912.