



The Parish Press

Newsletter of Saint Raphael Parish Family

Milford, Connecticut

September 2021



September 11 is HomeFront Day Last Call for Volunteers!

Use your time and talents during this one-day home repair blitz to help a Milford family in need. Contact Volunteer Coordinator Carrie Jayne Nocerino (carrietvl@yahoo.com) or 203-878-5566) if you can lend a hand.

Project Kickoff/Orientation Meeting Sunday, September 5

HomeFront volunteers, we look forward to seeing you at a brief kickoff/orientation session, Sunday, September 5. We'll meet in the Saint Gabriel church vestibule to go over project details after the 11 o'clock Mass. Meeting should start between 11:45 and noon. Thanks for being part of the team!

Celebrate Saint Raphael September 29 Feast Day Mass at 8:00 A.M.

Honor our patron, Saint Raphael, on Wednesday September 29, the Feast of the Archangels. Father John will offer Mass at 8:00 a.m. and a breakfast celebration will follow.



Details? A bit mysterious, like the angels themselves, as we went to press. But our *Celebrate Saint Raphael* tradition will continue! Watch the bulletin and our Google Group for specifics. Come enjoy the festivities.

Parishioners Share Impressions of the Synod Closing Mass

Saint Raphael parishioners who attended the Synod Closing Mass at Oakdale on August 13 were impressed. The Mass was *beautiful, wonderful, inspirational*. Several commented on the number and diversity of the people who came and how well organized the evening was - although many would have preferred Mass in a church, not a theater. No question about the music: *impressive, heavenly, like angels singing*. It inspired "a feeling of joy and peace throughout the theater." People were "honored" to be at the "first celebration of the Memorial of Blessed Father Michael McGivney on his new feast day."

As he signed the Synod's concluding documents, Archbishop Blair noted that "the work of the Synod is just beginning." The documents are currently available at archdioceseofhartford.org. As one parishioner wrote, "This Synod will only be as effective as the effort we all expend to make it a success." Commenting on the "wonderful experience of joining with thousands of Catholics praying together at Mass" another shared this: "The sound of so many voices joined together reflected the power and majesty of our shared faith in Jesus Christ."

The Ten Commandments Monuments and the Magic of Molasses

In the fall of 2007 the Knights of Columbus Tinto Council #47 installed a Ten Commandments monument at Saint Ann Church. The idea for the monument originated with Project Moses, a non-profit whose mission is to restore respect and appreciation for the Ten Commandments. The late Andy Charland, Tinto Council's 2007 Knight of the Year, had overseen the effort from its inception, and, with the invaluable assistance of Ed Caprio and other Knights and parishioners, Saint Ann's became the first church in the Archdiocese to have one of the handsome Mount Sinai marble monuments on its grounds. Another was subsequently placed at Saint Gabriel's, first at the school, then, last year, with a *monumental* 6-month effort, it was moved to its present location at the church.

In the intervening years wind, rain and weather had taken their toll on the monuments until you could barely decipher the words. An electrician by trade, but an inveterate "fixer," Ed searched for a way to restore the stones' original beauty. And he found it. The trick, used by monument workers for generations: molasses! And since it's the 21st century there's even a YouTube video Ed was able to use as a guide.

The process begins with a coat of molasses, followed by a coat of paint to render the stone *completely* black. (At that stage alarmed neighbors approached Ed and his crew, wanting to know why they were disfiguring the monument!) Scrub using dish soap and water, then use a cleaning stone to remove any remaining paint. The amazing, may we say *magical* result: a monument that looks like new. The steps in the process and some photos appear below. You can see the restored, now fresh-faced monuments, full size and looking splendid, at Saint Gabriel and Saint Ann Churches. Heartfelt thanks to Tinto Council #47 for their continuing generosity to Saint Raphael Parish and to Ed Caprio and his crew for a job extremely well done.

Project start: indecipherable monument >>



Magic method >>

Roll a light coat of molasses over the face of the stone. While it's still sticky cover the stone *completely* with black paint. Let dry for a minute then scrub the stone with dish soap and water. Use a special cleaning stone made with recycled glass to finish the job.

Stone covered in black paint >>



Voilà! Monument restored >>



An equation for the occasion: Innovation + Dedication + Hard Work + Molasses = Beautiful Ten Commandment Monuments.

A Social Justice Meditation



Reinhold Niebuhr

*God, give us grace to accept with serenity
the things that cannot be changed,
Courage to change the things
which should be changed,
and the Wisdom to distinguish
the one from the other.*

Most of us are familiar with the Serenity Prayer and its association with Alcoholics Anonymous. But few may know that the prayer, shown here in its original form, was written by the Protestant philosopher Reinhold Niebuhr.

Niebuhr (1892–1971) is considered by many the greatest American theologian of the 20th Century. A graduate of Yale University, he taught for more than 30 years at Union Theological Seminary in New York City. His focus was on the intersection of religion, politics and diplomacy and the nature of human beings as individuals and as members of a community. He believed that for a nation to remain free, it should use religion as a source of *self-criticism*, not *self-righteousness*.

As a young minister, Niebuhr considered himself a socialist, but his thinking evolved and led him to battle religious liberals over what he called their naïve views of the contradictions of human nature and the optimism of the social gospel. At the same time he criticized religious conservatives for their equally naïve view of Scripture and their narrow definition of "true religion."

A supporter of America's position in the Cold War, Niebuhr became a friend and advisor to Martin Luther King, Jr. and an opponent of the Vietnam War. His philosophical perspective became known as "Christian realism," and influenced, among others, foreign policy experts such as Senator John McCain, Secretary of State Madeline Albright and Presidents Jimmy Carter and Barack Obama.

Following Up on Some Earlier Reports . . .

Inquiring parishioners want to know about people whose stories we've covered here or via our Google Group postings. How is Father David? How is Emma Dunn? Did Jesse pass her nursing boards? Our crack staff checked. The "good news" answers appear below.



Fr. David Eliaona

Fr. David spent about 2 weeks in a hospital in Tanzania battling Covid. After his release he quarantined for a few weeks and is now back in action, walking 6 miles twice a day to increase his lung power. No running just yet, but he's working on it! He's living in Arusha and hopes to move to Nairobi, Kenya in December.

In August Father was the homilist at a Mass celebrated by Fr. Peter Quorro, a newly ordained priest he had mentored, at our sister parish, St. Brendan's in Ketete. Fr. David is on the mend and appreciates our prayers



Emma Dunn

Emma's mom, the former Katie Eden, filed this report: Here's an update that I've always wanted to write. Emma D, our tough as nails fighter, is happy, healthy, and living her best life this summer. In fact, between beach vacations and trips to our camp in New York State's Southern Tier, she is busy preparing for college! At the end of August, Emma will begin her freshman year at Villa Maria, a small, private, Catholic college right here in Buffalo. She is thrilled with the many options in front of her and is entering school undecided on a major. She's interested in photography, creative writing, psychology— and right now, the sky is the limit. With the love, support, and prayers of her many fans, I'm sure that Emma will find much success and happiness on her new adventure. And away we go!



Jesse Greene

Here, in her own words, is what Jesse has been up to!: I studied for my boards during May and June, and sat for the NCLEX-RN (nursing boards) exam June 21st at a testing site in Massachusetts. I received my "Passing" result two days later, and in early August my official nursing license was posted on the MA Board of Nursing site. I was so happy and grateful to be home with my parents when I received the exciting news that I had passed my boards.

I'm living in Middletown, RI and will begin my career as an R.N. at Saint Anne's Hospital in Fall River, MA at my August orientation. I'll be working on a Medical-Surgical Telemetry unit, which specializes in treating patients with cardiovascular diagnoses. I'll spend 8 weeks under the guidance of the Nursing Education department and will work alongside a nurse preceptor on my Telemetry Unit during my 8 week orientation. I am looking forward to learning new skills, meeting new coworkers, and caring for patients!

MYTHS VS FACTS

ABOUT HUMAN TRAFFICKING

An ongoing series from the the Pastoral Council's Human Concerns and Social Justice Committee, intended to educate parishioners and help them protect their children.

Myth: Human trafficking involves moving, traveling or transporting a person across state/national borders.

Fact: Human trafficking is often confused with human smuggling, which involves illegal border crossings. In fact, the crime of human trafficking does not require any movement whatsoever. Survivors can be recruited and trafficked in their own hometowns, even in their own homes.

For help or more information call the National Human Trafficking Hotline:
1-888-373-7888

GIFT - Growing In Faith Together

A Faith Formation Program for Children, Teens and Adults

Faith is a gift (*Catechism of the Catholic Church 153*) and it is through our aptly named GIFT program that Saint Raphael Parish educates our children and teens about the basics of our Catholic faith. GIFT is also meant for adults, as a way to answer their questions about the Catholic faith, to explain religious traditions and to help them grow in relationship with God. We welcome singles and couples to join us as we explore and discuss the beauty of Catholicism.

GIFT Faith Formation Program

GIFT's theme for this year is Prayer Life. Topics for the monthly sessions, which resume in October, include:

- Prayer and Forms/Styles of Prayer
- The Mass, Our Most Important Prayer
- Catholic Prayers
- Catholic Devotions
- The Bible and Prayer
- More Prayer Styles/ and Our Practice of Prayer

GIFT registration and Sacramental program materials were mailed last month. If you did not receive them or if you have questions please contact Maria Tomasetti - 203-988-8598 (voice or text) or atomasetti@snet.net. Materials are also available at the doors of both churches.

23 Filled Backpacks and LOTS of School Supplies!

Milford Youth & Family Services asked for our help in providing backpacks and school supplies for Milford students in need, and your response was amazing! 23 filled backpacks, bags and bags of additional school supplies and extra backpacks, too.

Thanks to your incredible generosity students are off to a great start this school year. Thank you for caring.

Rocky Railway Summer VBS Camp 2021 Jesus' Power Pulled Us Through!!

From July 26 through July 30 the Parish Center at our 501 Naugatuck Avenue campus was transformed into *Rocky Railway*, the site of our 11th annual Summer VBS Camp. There were trains, scenic views and Ramsey, Ava, Sierra, Finn and Lawrence Elk, animal Bible buddies who helped reinforce the daily Bible points.

19 in-person campers and a few young people who camped from home enjoyed Bible Adventures, KidVid Cinema, games and crafts, some rockin' Rocky Railway Music and Dance, with time out for tasty Chew Chew snacks.

With the help of our terrific team of adult and teen volunteers, 21 strong, the campers learned how Jesus' power helps us do hard things, be bold, be good friends. That power also gives us hope and lets us live forever. Campers were also focused on God sightings, thinking about and watching for where they see God in their lives every day.

Great camp experience! Thank you, campers, and special thanks to our volunteers for sharing their time, talents, faith and love with the campers. See you next summer!

Congratulations, Father Allen!

On Sunday, September 19, the Murphy Center for Ignatian Spirituality of Fairfield University will bestow a singular honor on Father Charles Allen, S.J., faithful friend of Saint Raphael Parish. Father will receive the James M. Bowler, S.J. Award for "his lifetime of service exemplifying the spirit of St. Ignatius Loyola." Congratulations, Father Allen. God bless you always.

GIFT Sacramental Program

The in-person sacramental overview meetings and October classes listed below will be held in the Parish Center at our 501 Naugatuck Avenue campus.

Confirmation

Overview

Wednesday, September 15, 7:00-8:30 p.m. OR

Thursday, September 23, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Required for incoming Confirmation candidates with a parent/guardian

Program Session - The Sacraments

Sunday, October 3, 1:00 - 2:30 p.m. OR

Tuesday, October 5, 6:30-8:00 p.m.

Required for incoming Confirmation candidates

First Communion/First Reconciliation

Choose:

Saturday, September 18, 10:30-11:30 a.m. OR

Saturday, September 18, 1:30-2:30 p.m.

Required for a parent/guardian

First Reconciliation Session #1

Saturday, October 2, 10:00-11:45 a.m.

Required for child w/parent or guardian



Snack Time



Young campers at the Rocky Railway Station

September: Synod Mass Impressions, VBS Camp Photos, Molasses Magic

Summer departs, fall arrives. School's in - and so are masks, again - it's September. And in this month's newsletter: notes and notions about the Synod Closing Mass from folks who were there, some great photos from VBS camp and a story about the magic of molasses. Who knew?!



The HomeFront team will be going into action on Saturday September 11. There's still time to sign on - see Page 1.

Circle Wednesday, September 29 on your calendars and help us celebrate our patron saint on the Feast of the Archangels. The date is firm. The details weren't fully in place at press time.

Enjoy every one of September's 30 days.

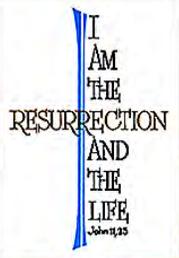
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In Memoriam

St. Raphael's mourns the recent loss of
Douglas Kasper
Michael Balascak

May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace.



Bereavement Support Meeting Sunday, September 12 at 2:00 p.m.

Our parish Bereavement Support group will meet on Sunday afternoon, September 12 at 2 o'clock in the Saint Ann Children's Chapel. If you are feeling bereft, grieving the loss of someone you love, we invite you to spend a quiet, prayerful hour with others who have known the pain of loss. Let us be with you as you begin the difficult journey from grief toward healing. Please call Joanne (203-877-4020) if you have questions or would like further information.

Saint Raphael Parish Website

<https://saintraphaelmilford.org>

International Rosary Tuesday, October 5, 7:00 p.m. Saint Gabriel Church



Pray the Rosary in a variety of languages during October's International Rosary. As part of this long-standing parish tradition, multi-lingual parishioners will lead each of the five decades in a different language - French, Italian, Portuguese, German and Vietnamese - an eloquent expression of the universal character of the Catholic Church. The evening will feature favorite Marian hymns and conclude with refreshments in the Saint Gabriel Hall. Please plan to be with us.

Pastoral Council Meets September 27

Pastoral Council

The Pastoral Council, on hiatus for the summer, will resume its regular schedule of fourth Monday meetings on September 27 at 7:00 pm in the Saint Ann Parish Center.

Parish Press Info due September 10

Information for October's newsletter is due in our editorial offices by Friday, September 10. Send your news and notes to parishpress06460@gmail.com or call Ann Eden (203-874-8744). Thanks very much.

T4S

Teens 4 Service 2021-2022 Kick-Off Meeting Monday, October 11

Our Teens for Service group will meet on Monday, October 11 from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. in a Parish Center classroom (501 Naugatuck Ave Campus). T4S, open to any teen in grades 7 through 12, initiates and participates in parish and/or community service projects throughout the year. At this kickoff meeting, we'll get to know each other a little better, brainstorm service ideas, and participate in a small service project. Join us, and bring a friend! Questions? Please contact Maria Tomasetti - 203-988-8598 (voice or text) or atomasetti@snet.net.