



The Parish Press

Newsletter of Saint Raphael Parish Family

Milford, Connecticut

March 2022



From
Father John's
Desk

By the time you receive this issue of *The Parish Press*, we, as Church, will be on the threshold of Lent. For the past two years, our Lenten observances have been interrupted by the coronavirus 2019 pandemic. In Lent 2020 our church buildings were shuttered, and people were locked down in their homes. It was a lonely Lent.

It was a little better the following year. Even though the church buildings had reopened, attendance was limited. In addition, the precautionary measures remained in effect. These included social distancing, masking, sanitizing, no missalettes, no congregational singing. It was yet another lonely Lent.

This year, as the omicron variant of the COVID-19 continues to fade, Lent will be somewhat back to normal. We are not limited in capacity, masks are optional for those who are fully vaccinated (we do ask unvaccinated folks to continue to wear masks in church), and we are spared from the constant spraying of disinfectants. We continue to work out some of the finer details of Lent 2022, but please join us in our celebration of this sacred season.

Father John

Parish Lenten Supper Friday, March 18, 6:00 p.m. Saint Ann Parish Center

The Parish Lenten Supper, once a staple of the season, is on the calendar again this year. Please mark the date, Friday evening, March 18 at 6:00 p.m., and come share a meal with the parish family. The simple menu seems perfect for a Lenten Friday:

*Fish and Chips or
Mac and Cheese*

Cole Slaw

Dessert

Coffee, Tea, Juice and Soft Drinks

Tickets (\$10 for adults; \$5 for children under 10) will be sold after Masses at both churches. We look forward to seeing you!

Lent: The Journey Begins

Our Lenten journey begins with an invitation: "Return to me," says the Lord, "with your whole heart. Rend your hearts, not your garments, and return to the Lord, your God." (Joel 2:12)

"We begin our Lenten journey with trust and joy," Pope Benedict XVI said eloquently in the last Ash Wednesday homily of his papacy, as we "return to God with all our heart."



We must not be deaf to Joel's appeal, which is also addressed in "a rite so simple and yet so beautiful, the imposition of ashes," a visual reminder of our need to turn away from sin. The pope closed his homily with a simple prayer. "May the Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church and model of every true disciple of the Lord accompany us on our journey. Amen!" Let the journey begin.

Stations of the Cross

Walk with Jesus on his journey to Calvary as you pray the Stations of the Cross. The Stations, an age-old devotion, provide an opportunity to reflect prayerfully on Jesus' suffering, death and resurrection.

We can come together at our churches for Stations this year and all Stations from Saint Ann's will be live-streamed at the parish website www.saintraphaelmilford.org. Please come and pray with us.

Afternoon Stations on the Fridays of Lent 3:00 p.m. at Saint Ann Church

March 4

Stations of the Cross by Father Michael Clay

March 11

Stations of the Cross for Peace

March 18

The Way of the Cross According to Luke

March 25

On the Way of the Cross with Saint Paul

April 8

Stations of the Cross for Today's Disciples

April 15

Mary's Way of the Cross

Evening Stations 7:00 p.m.

**Friday, March 25 at Saint Ann Church
Friday, April 8 at Saint Gabriel Church**

Parish teens will lead the evening stations using Ann Naffziger's booklet *The Way of the Cross for Children*. These Stations are appropriate for everyone, young and old alike, and Ms. Naffziger's reflections will speak to our hearts. We invite families and parishioners of all ages to be with us.

**Ash Wednesday
March 2**
Mass and Ashes
8:00 a.m.
12:00 Noon
Saint Gabriel Church
7:00 p.m.
Saint Ann Church

Saint Raphael Parish - Helping To Resettle an Afghan Refugee Family



As a member of the newly-organized coalition Milford's Way, the parish has joined an effort to resettle an Afghan refugee family here in Milford. The coalition, which includes several other local churches and Milford's two Rotary Clubs, came together under the guidance of IRIS (Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services).

The mission of this nonprofit agency in New Haven is to help refugees and other displaced people establish new lives, strengthen hope, and contribute to the vitality of Connecticut's communities. (GIFT families supported IRIS with generous Christmas donations in December.)

Milford's Way is anxiously awaiting news about the family they will sponsor. We do know that it will be one of the thousands of families now living on U.S. military bases around the country, families of Afghans who cooperated with American forces in Afghanistan. Following last fall's Taliban takeover of their government, these families were forced to leave their homes under threat of death. Unknown as yet: the size of the family (anywhere from 3 to 11 people) or when they will arrive (possibly with as little as 24-48 hours notice).

In the meantime the coalition is recruiting volunteers, seeking their help in various capacities (see box at right). If you would like to volunteer, or for additional information, please contact Al May at amay4713@gmail.com.

Volunteers Needed to Help Afghan Refugee Family

- *Find permanent housing
- *Obtain family health coverage
- *Find providers who accept that coverage
- *Drive family members to appointments
- *Connect with employment opportunities
- *Assist with school enrollment
- *Provide guidance in using public transportation

The group is also engaged in fundraising, primarily to cover the family's rental costs for the first 3-6 months, until they become independent. To support this humanitarian effort with a gift, you may send your check to Milford's Way, c/o Saint Peter's Episcopal Church, 71 River St., Milford, CT 06460. Thank you for your kindness and concern.

Psalms by Father Rob Galea and Peter DeMarco Published by GIA

During Music Director Peter DeMarco's 2019 visit with Father Rob Galea in Australia - and to no one's surprise - the two friends and fellow musicians spent some time writing new music. Some was for Ash Wednesday, then just weeks away, some for the Sundays of Lent. Three of their psalms have now been published by GIA (Gregorian Institute of America), one of the largest publishers of Catholic liturgical music in the United States. Well done, Peter and Father Rob! Congratulations!



Fr Rob & Peter at work. Australia, 2019

Getting music accepted for publication can be a lengthy and difficult process, even for the top liturgical composers. Father Rob submitted his and Peter's psalms to GIA in October of 2020, but it was not until January of 2021 that they received word that GIA had accepted 3 of them for individual release. Next: proofreading the pieces (in October 2021) and signing contracts in December.

The psalms were posted at giamusic.com, the GIA website, in January and are included in the company's Lent and Easter 2022 brochure, which is sent to every church across the country. Virtually anyone - music directors, pastors, cantors, choir members - can browse through the brochure to find and purchase the music that's available, including these 3 psalms.

"Individual release" means that the pieces are sold individually, the usual practice for new music. If a piece gains traction and sales are brisk, the publisher may consider placing it in a hymnal, such as GIA's *Gather*. (Saint Raphael uses *Breaking Bread*, a publication of OCP, Oregon Catholic Press.)

Peter was asked to write piano parts for each psalm, which would eventually be "engraved." In the pre-digital age an engraver would write the music out using pen and ink. Through the use of special computer applications GIA would then select the fonts, chord symbols, art work and more that now appear in the final printed version, called an octavo.

"We will be using all of the new psalms at Saint Raphael Parish this Lent!" Peter wrote to our reporter - his exclamation point certainly reflecting his joy and excitement.

Listen for these newly published pieces during the first weeks of the Lenten season:

Be Merciful, O Lord, for We Have Sinned
Ash Wednesday

The Lord Is My Light and My Salvation
Second Sunday of Lent

The Lord is Kind and Merciful
Third Sunday of Lent

"I am so honored that our psalms have been chosen to be published by GIA Publications," Peter wrote. "And it continues to be a source of immense joy to collaborate with Fr. Rob!"

The parish family shares your joy, Peter, and celebrates your collaborative accomplishment.

Saint Raphael Parish Website
www.saintraphaelmilford.org

**Prayer Life
The Bible and Prayer**

**Friday, March 11
6:30 - 8:15 p.m.**

**Sunday, March 13
12:30 - 2:15 p.m.**

**Tuesday, March 15
6:30 - 8:15 p.m.**

**Sessions will start inside
Saint Ann Church.**

**GIFT for March
Prayer Life
The Bible and Prayer**

GIFT's topic for this year has been Prayer Life and we've looked at the various forms of prayer, at the Mass, at different Catholic prayers and devotions.

This month's focus is on the Bible. We'll learn, in age-appropriate ways, the importance of prayer and how God's Word can help us to pray. We'll look at the prayers of people from the Old Testament and the New Testament, including Jesus, the very prayerful carpenter from Nazareth.

We'll explore two ways to pray with Scripture: *Lectio Divina* (Sacred Reading) a prayer method that begins with a Scriptural passage, and Gospel Contemplation. "Prayer," said Mother Teresa, "is putting oneself in the hands of God, and listening to His voice in the depth of our hearts." That voice seems especially clear when we pray with Scripture.

This session is required for First Communion families and for Confirmation candidates with a parent, guardian or sponsor.

**Attention, VBS Campers!
Save the Dates: July 25-29**

Mark your calendars for a Holy Land adventure at this summer's VBS camp, mornings from July 25 through July 29. Discover the Jerusalem that Jesus knew, bustling with activity.



Listen to the music echoing through the Marketplace. Smell the fresh, warm bread. See, hear, touch and taste what it might have been like during Bible times and walk where Jesus walked on His way to the Cross.

Parents take note: This year's camp can accommodate up to 20 young people ages 4-11, with masks indoors and safe distancing. Any changes will be based on current health and safety considerations. Need more information? Want to save a space for your favorite young camper? Contact Maria Tomasetti, 203-988-8598 or atomasetti@snet.net.

**GIFT
Sacramental
Program Schedule**

First Communion

Session #2

Saturday, March 5
10:00 a.m. - 12 Noon

Two Parish Center Classrooms
(Saint Ann Campus)

A weekend evening make-up session will also be scheduled.

Tour of Saint Ann Church

Saturday, March 26
10:00 a.m. - 12 Noon

A weekday evening make-up will be scheduled at Saint Gabriel Church.

Required for First Communion children w/parent or guardian

Confirmation

Advanced Tour of Saint Ann Church and Sacred Music

Sunday, March 6
1:00 - 2:30 p.m.

or

Advanced Tour of Saint Gabriel Church and Sacred Music

Tuesday, March 8
6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Required for Candidates



**CRS Rice Bowl
Faith in Action**

CRS Rice Bowls will be at all the church doors as Lent begins, a quiet reminder of our need to give alms. Lenten donations through the Rice Bowl program support the work of Catholic Relief Services in more than 100 different countries each year. 25% of our donations remain in the Archdiocese of Hartford, supporting efforts to alleviate hunger and poverty. Since its inception in 1975 CRS Rice Bowl has raised nearly \$300 million.



**Attn: Class of 2022
What are your plans after graduation?**

We've started making plans for our annual Saint Raphael Parish Graduation Celebration, a June calendar highlight. It's always a special day, when we recognize our eighth grade, high school and college graduates at a very significant moment in their lives.

We've begun to reach out for information to all graduates and their parents/guardians. We'd like to know about your current school and where you'll go/what you'll do after graduation. Please contact Maria Tomasetti (as above) to share your information and to sign up to participate as a family in our June festivities. May we be among the first to congratulate you on your upcoming graduation!

**Warmth and Smiles
on Winter Family Fun Night**

Oh, the weather outside was frightful, frightfully cold on Saturday, February 5, but thanks to Zoom and a terrific group of parish teens several families enjoyed Winter Family Fun Night in the warmth and comfort of their own homes.

The festivities kicked off with *The Biggest Snowman Ever*, a perennial favorite about the importance of working together. The teens also read Cynthia Rylant's beautiful and peaceful book *Snow*. There were games galore, including Simon Says, Snowman Bingo, charades and DIY indoor bowling (with cardboard tube pins and aluminum foil bowling balls). And we made snowmen - no boots, jackets or mittens required - created with cotton balls and yarn-wrapped cardboard tubes.

It was definitely a fun evening, with lots of smiles to go around. Thank you for being with us, Amelia, Julian, Brooklyn, Ethan, Sebastian and your guests. And special thanks to our teen presenters, Abbey, Ava, Bianca, and Molly,

Welcome to Capricious March!

Capricious March is upon us. Chilly winds, then a touch of spring warmth, then the snow falls - that's March! Lots of green, too, the spring green of emerging crocuses and daffodils and the bright Kelly green of the shamrocks on Saint Patrick's Day, when everyone's at least a little bit Irish.



Green is also the color of hope, like the feeling in the message from Father John's Desk. We can sense that hope as we enter the Lenten season of prayer, fasting and almsgiving and gather again for Mass, for Stations (in-person this year) and for the upcoming Lenten Supper on March 18.

Peter and Father Rob have shared some exciting news and the Milford's Way coalition is working hard to resettle an Afghan family. May you have a hopeful, blessed Lent.

The Parish Press

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Lent Begins on Ash Wednesday, March 2.

In Memoriam



St. Raphael's mourns the recent loss of
Joanne Pitsch

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

Bereavement Support Meets Sunday, March 13



The parish Bereavement Support group will meet on Sunday, March 13 at 2:00 p.m. in the Saint Ann's Children's Chapel. If you are grieving the death of someone you love please think about joining us. You may find consolation in sharing your fears and concerns with others who have known the pain of loss. You may call Joanne (203-877-4020) for additional information.

Lenten Reflection Booklets At the Church Doors

Lent with Dorothy Day, the pocket-sized book of reflections by Carol Morrow, is a gift for you from the parish. Please take one and let Dorothy Day be your guide as you journey through Lent. Be inspired by this one woman's radical love for others. How do we care for the least among us?

The Holy Father's Prayer Intention for March

A Christian Response to Bioethical Challenges
We pray for Christians facing new bioethical challenges; may they continue to defend the dignity of all human life with prayer and action.

March Calendar Events

Blue Mantle Knitting/Crocheting Ministry

Mondays, 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Note: 2nd Mondays 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Saint Gabriel Ministry Center

Information: 203-283-3548

Rosary Group

Tuesdays at noon

Saint Ann Children's Chapel

Information: 203-877-4020

All are welcome.

Sunday Mass Scripture Review

Thursdays at 10:00 a.m.

Saint Ann Children's Chapel

Questions: 203-868-2377 (call or text)

New participants welcome.

Creative Hands

Thursdays, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Saint Ann Parish Library

Information: vyergeau@gmail.com

or call 203-687-9568

Information Deadline for April Newsletter

Tuesday, March 15

(Yes, the Ides of March - beware!)

Send to parishpress06460@gmail.com

or call 203-874-8744

Pastoral Council Meeting

Monday, March 28 at 7:00 p.m.

Saint Gabriel's Hall