



The Parish Press

Newsletter of Saint Raphael Parish Family

Milford, Connecticut

April 2022



As we continue to journey through Lent, we anticipate the celebration of Holy Week. This most sacred time begins on Palm Sunday with the singing of Hosannas and cheers from the adoring crowds. By Friday the cheers have turned into jeers as the crowds watch Jesus make his way to Calvary. We recreate the heights and depths of that emotion in our Liturgical celebrations on Holy Thursday and Good Friday. The week culminates on Saturday with the Easter Vigil in the Holy Night.

In May 2019, after great study and much discussion, the Pastoral Council's Prayer and Worship Committee recommended that we not alternate between churches for the Easter Triduum. Three days chronologically, they are liturgically one day, beginning with Holy Thursday's Mass of the Lord's Supper, continuing with Good Friday of the Lord's Passion and ending with the joyous Mass of the Resurrection of the Lord on Saturday and Sunday. The single celebration of the Triduum in one church only is significant and appropriate.

Unfortunately in 2020 and 2021 the impact of the global COVID-19 Pandemic prevented us from implementing this parish decision. Holy Week services in 2020 were celebrated privately, but were available via Zoom. Some COVID restrictions were eased for 2021, but the liturgical celebrations of the Sacred Triduum were still limited in scope. This year, however, we face none of the earlier impediments to a full celebration of the liturgical actions of Holy Week. Therefore, this year the entire Triduum will be celebrated in Saint Gabriel Church. Please see the schedule at right and plan to be with us.

Have a blessed Easter.

Father John

Saint Raphael Parish Website
www.saintraphaelmilford.org

Information Deadline for May Newsletter
Friday, April 15
Send info to parishpress06460@gmail.com
or call 203-874-8744

Lenten Opportunities as the Season Draws to a Close

Stations of the Cross

Fridays, 3:00 p.m.
Saint Ann Church
April 1 and April 8

Friday at 7:00 p.m.
Saint Gabriel Church
April 8

Led by parish teens, open to all.

Easter Triduum Saint Gabriel Church

April 14
Holy Thursday
Mass of the Lord's Supper
7:00 p.m.

April 15
Good Friday
Celebration of
the Lord's Passion
3:00 p.m.

April 16
Holy Saturday
The Easter Vigil
8:00 p.m.

Confessions

Mondays, 6:00-6:30 p.m.
April 4 at Saint Gabriel Church
April 11 at Saint Ann Church

Saturdays, 3:00 p.m.
April 2 at Saint Ann Church
April 9 at Saint Gabriel Church

We Are An Easter People *Alleluia* is Our Song

Our *Alleluias* will rise like fragrant incense to God Most High during the Mass of the Resurrection of the Lord, celebrated at Saint Gabriel's during the Easter Vigil and again on Easter Sunday.

Easter Sunday Masses

8:00 a.m.
11:00 a.m.
Saint Gabriel Church
9:30 a.m.
Saint Ann Church

Congratulations, Matthew and Mary Jo Downs! Recipients of the Saint Joseph Medal of Appreciation

On Sunday afternoon, March 20, Archbishop Blair welcomed those who had come to the Cathedral of Saint Joseph from "the four corners of the Archdiocese" for a very special occasion, the presentation of the Saint Joseph Medal of Appreciation. He thanked the honorees for using their gifts generously and for giving witness by their example to "the embrace of love for others" that is the Kingdom of God - a perfect description for Matt and MaryJo.



Matthew and MaryJo Downs

A faithful cantor and choir member, Matt is a setup man for multiple parish functions and the technical advisor for the parish's live-streaming. MaryJo has served as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion for several years and works diligently with the First Communion classes, helping the children as they prepare to receive Jesus in Eucharist. She is best known, perhaps, for her tireless fund raising efforts on behalf of the parish as chair of the Tag Sale and the Christmas Fair. Not only do these events raise funds, but they bring people together as a team, raise spirits and burnish the image of Saint Raphael Parish for parishioners and visitors alike. Congratulations, Matt and MaryJo. You make us proud.

A Social Justice Meditation



Sr. Elizabeth Johnson

On suffering and social justice: "God did not make or want Jesus to suffer; a loving, compassionate God could not create anyone to suffer. Without getting too far into theological weeds here, it is safe to say that redemption came about by Jesus teaching us how to redeem our fallen natures by "accompanying" others whose poverty and suffering reach out for love and healing and belief in God. As Rabbi Abraham Heschel, one of the 20th Century's leading Jewish theologians, put it, "The exploitation of the poor to us is a misdemeanor; to God, it is a disaster." - Sister Elizabeth Johnson

Considered by National Catholic Reporter "one of the country's most prominent theologians," Sister Elizabeth Johnson, C.S.J., Ph.D. is a Distinguished Professor of Theology Emerita at Fordham University. As a young adult she joined the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Brentwood, on Long Island, NY.

Sister Elizabeth received a PhD in theology from Catholic University of America in 1981 and taught there for ten years before moving to Fordham. She is a former president of the Catholic Theological Society of America, the oldest and largest society of theologians in the world, and a former president of the American Theological Society, an ecumenical association.

Sister Elizabeth has received fifteen honorary doctorates, the John Courtney Murray Award for distinguished achievement in theology, and numerous other accolades. Her book *She Who Is* has garnered several honors. Her public service has included being a theologian on the national Lutheran-Catholic Dialogue, a consultant to the US Catholic Bishops' Committee on Women in Church and Society, a theologian on the Vatican-sponsored dialogue between science and religion, and a core committee member of the Catholic Common Ground Initiative, whose goal is to reconcile polarized groups within the Catholic Church.

A Question About Human Trafficking

Our series continues

What are the top 10 U.S. states for human trafficking?

Answer (per 100,000 population):

Nevada (7.38 cases) **Mississippi** (5.00 cases)

Florida (4.04 cases) **Ohio** (3.84 cases)

Georgia (3.81 cases) **Delaware** (3.81 cases)

California (3.80 cases) **Missouri** (3.77 cases)

Michigan (3.64 cases) **Texas** (3.59 cases)

Connecticut (1.47 cases) has one of the lowest rates nationally, even though I-95 and I-91 are considered major routes for traffickers going north to New England or south to New York City and beyond.

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

Restoring the Patina of our Church Pews Combatting the Covid Effect

The Covid effect, the negative impact of the Coronavirus pandemic, has infiltrated virtually all aspects of society, even, in a fascinating and roundabout way, our church pews. Shuttered for months, our churches opened again to a vigorous system of sanitizing. After every Mass or service dedicated teams of masked and gloved parishioners wielded spray bottles of disinfectant with a vengeance, staving off the possible spread of infection and, in addition, wiping off some of the finish and the soft patina of the wooden pews. They looked, in a word, *awful*. What to be done?



Enter the newly formed parish Task Force, whose members assessed the pews at Saint Ann's and, after a bit of experimentation, settled on a custom blend of Old English scratch cover for light and dark woods to address the problem. *Apply, let dry, wipe down* became their mantra, completion by Holy Week their goal. And they began. Working Monday through Thursday, taping pews off as they went, they completed one side of the church in three days. The resulting *quite good* rating energized the team. Application on the other side was completed in a single day and included the ambo and the pews on both sides of the sanctuary. Factor in the time for drying, touchup and wiping down and the entire project, begun on February 21, was completed before Ash Wednesday.

Meanwhile, a maintenance crew was working on the pews in our venerable Saint Gabriel Church, which, as Father Maroney points out, is almost a hundred years old. The disinfectant resisted the crew's efforts at first, and many of the pews looked gray in the sunlight. In round two, persistence and a great deal of elbow grease prevailed. The pews are now *clean and shiny*. The crew used Liquid Gold for some areas and Black Walnut for the seats and heavily worn sections.



Kudos and congratulations to all the members of the the maintenance crew and the Task Force for a job very well done. How perfect that the work was completed in time for Easter, the "greatest of all Sundays," when our *Alleluias* ring out as we celebrate the resurrection of the Lord! Thank you.

Future Task Force projects at Saint Ann's include cleaning and polishing the doors and paneling, the railings at the side entrances and painting lines in the parking lots of both churches. Interested in joining this crackerjack team? Call Lou Servideo at 203-260-4750.

**GIFT
Sacramental
Program Schedule
First Communion**

Tour of St. Ann Church
Saturday, March 26
10:00 a.m. - 12 Noon

or

Tour of St. Gabriel Church
Saturday, April 2
1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

*Learning and Praying
the Rosary*

Monday, April 11
6:30-7:30 p.m.

Parish Center Classrooms

*Tours and Rosary Session
required for First Communion
children w/parent or guardian.*

**GIFT for April
Prayer Life: Prayer Styles and Daily Prayer**

During April's GIFT sessions we'll continue our focus on prayer and learn about other ways to raise our minds and hearts to God. Check out the box below, various styles of prayer we may discuss this month.

Singing or listening to a hymn

<i>Prayers by saints</i>	<i>Catholic meditation</i>	<i>Retreats</i>
<i>Prayers we write</i>	<i>Contemplation</i>	<i>Pilgrimages</i>
<i>Spontaneous prayers</i>	<i>Mantras</i>	<i>Labyrinths</i>
<i>Short prayers</i>	<i>Journaling</i>	<i>Praying with art</i>

We'll also think about and discuss, in age-appropriate ways, our daily prayer routines and plan for a practice of daily prayer - making time for God every day in a way that makes us feel joyful, at peace and most alive. Our daily connection with God and regular weekend worship at Mass, our most important prayer, can help us to feel God's presence and to live our lives centered on God.

We'll practice safe distancing and masks will be optional unless Milford school guidelines change before April 1. Questions? Please contact Maria Tomasetti, atomasetti@snet.net or 203-988-8598 (voice or text).

**Prayer Life
Sessions for April**

Friday, April 1
6:30 - 8:15 p.m.

Sunday, April 3
12:30 - 2:15 p.m.

Tuesday, April 5
6:30 - 8:15 p.m.

Sessions will begin in
Saint Ann Church.

**VBS Camp Volunteers Needed
Adults, Young People 12 and Older**

The recruiting office is open for this year's VBS Camp! Looking for a temporary, strictly volunteer, summer position? We have several slots available.

Activity center leaders (adults and older teens) for Music/Dance, Synagogue School, Village Playground Games, Bible Drama, and (new!) Marketplace Shopkeepers. **Activity center helpers** (adults and youth volunteers). **Tribe (small group) leaders** (adults and teens entering Grade 9 or older). **Assistant Tribe leaders** (preteen volunteers).

There will be an evening volunteer kickoff meeting in May as well as June and July evening meetings to plan and prepare for the volunteer positions. We will also need help with setup and decorating on some evenings during the weeks of July 11 and July 18.

Interested? Questions? Please contact Maria, as above. Thank you.

**VBS Camp 2022 - Register Today!
Walk Where Jesus Walked**

This summer's VBS campers will step back in history to the Jerusalem of Jesus' time, where the Marketplace is always abuzz.

They'll gather in tribes (small groups), explore traditions and visit activity centers like the Synagogue School, which they can compare with their own schools and where they'll discover what it might have been like for a teenage Jesus to visit the Temple in Jerusalem. Campers can check out the Village Playground, a hot spot for board game lovers and young athletes. Bible Buddies will help them remember daily Bible stories and Bible points. As they follow the steps that Jesus took, the campers will discover what it means to walk with Jesus today.

We can safely accommodate some 30 campers this year. As always, we will pay close attention to Milford's Covid-19 numbers and will share Covid safety protocols by early July.

Please contact Maria, as above, to register your children (or grandchildren?) for this exciting VBS Summer adventure.



**Summer VBS Camp
Monday-Friday
July 25-29
9:00 a.m. - 12 noon
Ages 4 through 11
Saint Ann Campus**

**Parish Graduation Celebration Sunday, June 26
11:00 a.m. Mass and Reception at Saint Gabriel's**

Cap and Gown season is fast approaching and we extend a warm invitation to our eighth grade, high school and college graduates to be with us for the graduation celebration, an annual rite of passage. You are a very important part of the parish and we are proud and happy to recognize you at such an important time in your lives. Reach out to Maria, as above, for details. Registration deadline is June 19.



**Sacramental Notes
First Reconciliation**

Three young parishioners, Gehrig Canell, Nolan Canell and Brennen Lawless, met Jesus for the first time in the Sacrament of Reconciliation on Saturday, February 12 at Saint Gabriel Church.

Congratulations! May you grow ever closer to God through this beautiful sacrament.

A Note of Gratitude . . .

. . . to the Lenten Supper committee and to everyone who contributed to a true community gathering on March 18. How heartwarming to come together as a parish family! Thank you.



Ready to Return Your Rice Bowl?

Thank you for your generous support of CRS Rice Bowl, our parish Lenten project. To make your returns, when you are ready: *Bring them to an April GIFT session; *Put them in the collection basket (sealed box or labeled envelope) or *Bring them to the office during regular business hours.

Let the Holy Anthem Rise!

As we move from the Lenten violet that opens this month to Good Friday's red and the horror of the crucifixion, we might agree with T.S. Eliot that "April is the cruellest month"- at least this year. But Christ triumphs over death. On Easter morning we see the glory of the empty tomb. Be sure to read Father John's piece about Holy Week and the Triduum.



Check out the volunteer opportunity postings sprinkled through these pages and smile at the handsome couple who were honored at the Cathedral in March. Church pews seem to glow this month? Find out how that happened.

Above all, rejoice! Jesus is risen. Love is alive. Have a beautiful Easter.

The Parish Press

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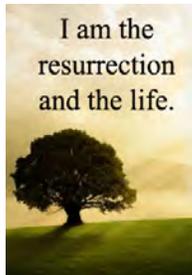
SAINT RAPHAEL PARISH

Saint Ann Church Saint Gabriel Church
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Milford, CT 06460-5048

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Alleluia, He is Risen!
Easter Sunday, April 17

In Memoriam



I am the
resurrection
and the life.

St. Raphael's mourns the recent loss of:

Mary Keller	Kevin Morton
Rita O'Hara	Thomas Grace
Raymond J. Weiner	Jennie Kuchta
Rosemary K. Lynch	Ellery Morrell
Shirley Pjura	Alice Connors
Krystyna Cwiczak	Barbara Sumner
Martin Bruce Hardiman	

May they know the joy of the resurrection as they see God's face in glory.

Bereavement Support Meets Sunday, April 10



If you are struggling to cope with the death of someone you love, please consider meeting with our Bereavement Support group. Join us on Palm Sunday afternoon, April 10, at 2 o'clock in the quiet of the St. Ann Children's Chapel. Let us walk with you, if only for a little while, on the difficult road from grief to healing. You may call Joanne (203-877-4020) if you would like additional information.

May Crowning Honor Mary, Our Mother

Sunday, May 1 at Saint Ann's
after the 9:30 Mass

Gather in front of the statue of Mary outside the church.

Sunday, May 8 at Saint Gabriel's
Jesse Greene has the honor of crowning Mary
at the 11 o'clock Mass.



Welcome!

to the newest members of our parish family,

Dominic Lisi
Harper Lee Belinda
Giovanni Ferraiolo
Madison Bailey Laneuville

Dominic was baptized on Sunday, February 20 at Saint Gabriel Church. Harper, Giovanni and Madison received the life-giving waters of Baptism on Sunday, March 20 at Saint Ann Church.

God's warmest blessings on you, little ones. May you know joy and goodness all the days of your lives.



Opportunities for Service

**Additional Substitutes for Beth-El Center's
Evening Dinner Ministry- 2nd Wednesday of the month**
Contact Maria (atomasetti@snet.net or 203-988-8598)

Money Counters

Be part of the money counting teams that meet on Sunday mornings on a rotating basis.
Excellent training available!
Call Laura Frutkin (203-306-8276)
or Lou Servideo (203-306-4750)

Tag Sale and Christmas Fair Teams

Yes! They are back on the calendar!
Tag Sale: June 4 Christmas Fair: December 3
Call MaryJo Downs (203-882-0695)