



The Parish Press

Newsletter of Saint Raphael Parish Family
Milford, Connecticut

December 2022



Saint Raphael Parish Advent Retreat

The Journey of Advent: The Joy of the Gospel

Reflections: Fr. Maurice Maroney Music: Saint Ann Choir

On Sunday and Monday, December 4th and 5th, Father Maroney and the Saint Ann Choir will present a two-part Advent retreat. Please gather with us for an afternoon and an evening of music, readings and contemplation. Father Maroney will share his reflections on the Gospels of Advent for this new liturgical year and what they mean for our lives. The choir will raise their melodious voices and invite you to join them in Advent hymns and music of the season. Our Advent journey continues. Let us prepare with joy to welcome the Lord at his coming.

Advent Retreat Schedule

Part 1

Sunday, December 4
3:00 p.m.
Saint Gabriel Church

Part 2

Monday, December 5
7:00 p.m.
Saint Ann Church



Don't Miss the Christmas Fair!
Saint Ann Parish Center
Saturday, December 3
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

You'll want to be there for our one-day spectacular! Come early - it's the best time to shop. Come with family and friends - it's more fun that way. Have a snack. Stay for lunch. Spend the day!

Toy soldiers will welcome you, strolling carolers will enchant you, and the artisans, crafters and vendors will delight you with their array of unique items. Stop by the Raffle Room and take a chance, or an armful of chances, on the wreaths, beautiful baskets and other "Oh, I'd love that!" prizes that are on display. Visit Santa. He'll be there - he never misses our Christmas Fair - so be sure to bring your list and give him your best "I've been really good" smile.

Come see what the Card and Gift Shop has to offer. and pick up your Scrip cards - great choices for gifts and stocking stuffers.

The Christmas Fair is a major fund-raiser for Saint Raphael Parish. We look forward to seeing you there!

Holy Day Masses

Feast of the Immaculate Conception
Thursday, December 8

8:00 a.m. Saint Gabriel
7:00 p.m. Saint Ann

The mosaic shown at right was a gift to the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C. from Popes Benedict XV and Pius XI. It contains 250,000 pieces of natural stone sanded smooth to resemble a painting.



Advent & Christmas Reflections

Waiting in Joyful Hope

If you haven't done so already, please take a copy of the booklet you'll find at the doors of both churches. Mary DeTurrís Poust offers insightful prayers, meditations and reflections on topics ranging from *Brave in Our Fear* through *Jumping for Joy*, *Love Over Hate* and *The Poetry of Prayer*.



As we have journeyed through Advent the Magi have been on an arduous journey to see and pay homage to the newborn King. May we, too, look up and follow His star.

Christmas Schedule

Confessions

Monday, December 19

10:00 - 10:30 a.m. at Saint Ann Church

Tuesday, December 20

3:00 - 3:30 p.m. at Saint Gabriel Church

Wednesday, December 22

7:00 - 7:30 p.m. at Saint Ann Church

Masses

Christmas Eve	Christmas Day
Saturday, December 24	Sunday, December 25
4:00 p.m.	9:30 a.m.
Saint Gabriel Church	Saint Ann Church
4:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.	11:00 a.m.
Saint Ann Church	Saint Gabriel Church
	NO 8:00 a.m. Mass

A Seasonal Focus: The Advent Wreath

We can mark our journey to Christmas by the lighting of the Advent wreath. Watch the weekly bulletin for information about this well-loved Advent tradition.

Pray the Fatima Rosary

Saturday, December 3, 11:00 a.m.

First Saturday recitation of the Fatima Rosary continues on December 3 at 11:00 a.m. in Saint Ann Church. We will pray for the peace the world cannot give as we wait with eager expectation for the coming of the Prince of Peace.

Sip and Socialize at Coffee And December 10 and 11

Enjoy coffee, tea, conversation and tasty snacks at the Parish Center or Saint Gabriel's Hall after Mass on Saturday or Sunday, December 10/11. Spend a little time with some of the finest people we know - the members of our parish family!

The articles on this page reflect the generosity of Saint Raphael Parish. Thank you.

Parish Christmas Giving Program

The little Christmas tree has returned, a gentle reminder about our parish Christmas Giving Program, which began on the first weekend of Advent. Our chubby tree, as the note beside it relates, is decorated with the names of the families/organizations we will be helping this year.

There are Christmas trees in the vestibules of both churches - not quite so distinctive as our "little tree that could" - their branches filled with ornaments that are the holiday wishes of people in health care facilities or individuals and families in need.

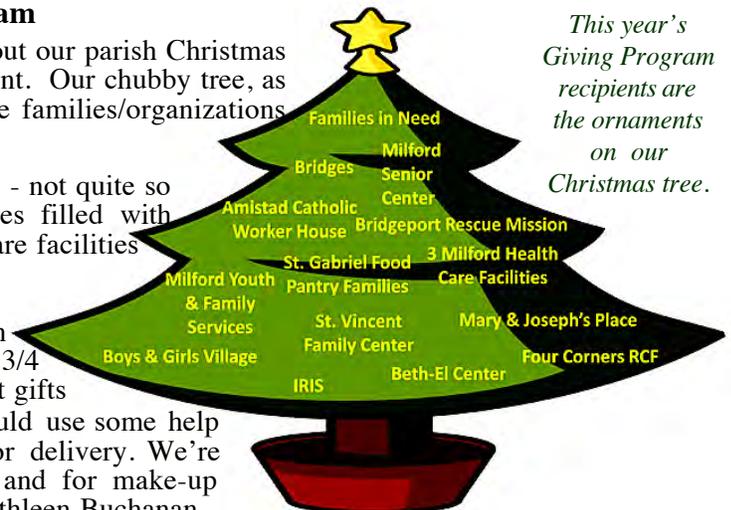
Please take a gift tag (more than one, if you can) and return the gift(s), with tag attached, on the weekends of December 3/4 and December 10/11, at the latest.* (We want to be sure that gifts

are delivered by Christmas.) Our Giving Program crew could use some help on those weekends, checking gifts in and sorting them for delivery. We're also recruiting delivery elves for Monday, December 12 and for make-up dates. If you have questions or can assist, please contact Kathleen Buchanan,

203-606-6476; Rose Marie Marmolejo, 203-378-5508; or Maria Tomasetti (as on page 3). Thank you very much.

*You may use the following direct-ship link to the holiday wish list registry for gifts for Boys & Girls Village. <https://www.myregistry.com/wishlist/wish-list-due-by-dec-11th-please-milford-ct/2586499/giftlist>.

This year's Giving Program recipients are the ornaments on our Christmas tree.



T4S and Boxes of Joy



Thanks to the generosity of our Saint Raphael parishioners 34 Boxes of Joy are on their way, Christmas gifts for impoverished children in developing countries. To complete their T4S Cross Catholic Outreach project, eight parish teens and friends met in early December and filled the boxes with items parishioners had donated. For some of the children, who range in age from 2 to 14, this will be the only gift they receive. Some, in fact, may never before have received a Christmas gift.

What goes into a shoe-box size Box of Joy? Several small treasures, like plush animals, toy cars and trucks, coloring books with crayons, dolls, and craft kits. Other fun things, too, such as t-shirts, socks, sunglasses, and candy canes, as well as school supplies, Rosary beads, and hygiene items like soap, hand cream, toothpaste and toothbrushes. The teens packed the boxes lovingly and tucked a handmade card into each one.

Our boxes were delivered on November 12 to a local drop-off center at Saint Theresa Parish in Trumbull. Next stop: the Cross Catholic Outreach Box of Joy Screening Center in Doral, Florida, where gifts are screened for safety. From there they go to Guatemala, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Grenada, Honduras and other developing countries, where they live up to their name, bringing Christmas joy to children.

Ukrainian Relief Project Followup

The call went out in late October: *Urgent Need for Winter Clothing for Ukraine*. Deadline for donations: Friday, November 4. Your response was incredible. Ten to fifteen bags of donations came in every day, eventually filling 3/4 of the Reconciliation Room at Saint Ann's, 1/3 of the Children's Chapel and most of the vestibule at Saint Gabriel's. As more donations arrived kind Mass-goers would move them to the "assembly spots" to make room for more.

Donations had to be brought to New Haven's Saint Michael the Archangel Church, which had organized the drive, no later than Saturday, November 5. Starting before 9 o'clock that morning an assembly line of parishioners moved the bags, now gathered at Saint Ann's, out to our transport vehicles. 5 pickup trucks, 3 SUVs and 1 step van brought everything to New Haven before noon. One 5-year old St. Michael's parishioner, arriving for religious ed class, insisted on helping one of our drivers carry a bag at least 4-times his size into the church. More than one Saint Raphael parishioner who had missed the 11/4 deadline in Milford drove donations to Saint Michael's on their own.

Pictured at right, in front of and almost obscuring Saint Michael's, is the truck packed with all the donations to be shipped to Ukraine. Fr. Roman Manulak, the church's point person in Ukraine, will oversee the reception and distribution of the donations.

Heartfelt thanks to everyone who responded to the urgent call. May God bless you always for your kindness and your unbelievable generosity.



Growing in Faith Together (GIFT) for December

Faith Formation for People of All Ages

Catholic Social Teaching Call to Family and Community

Sunday, December 11
12:30 - 2:15 p.m.

Tuesday, December 13
6:30 - 8:15 p.m.

This month we will look at the most important social unit in society, the family. Through a variety of fun-filled activities and interactive learning, family session participants (adults w/children through Grade 4)

will learn how God made us to be part of families, communities and nations, so that all people can share and help each other.

Other age groups will delve more deeply into our Call to Family, Community and Participation. Human beings thrive in community. God created us as social beings who grow to our fullest and most satisfying potential in community with others. The seeds of wisdom, mercy, and courage are planted and the foundation of integrity takes root within the holy and secure embrace of marriage and family. We learn to join our strengths and weaknesses with the strengths and weaknesses of others to form a harmonious world.

This session is required for Confirmation candidates with a parent or guardian. We encourage all families, couples and single parishioners to be with us. All participants will receive a home kit for continued learning.

Congratulations to the Confirmandi!



During a solemn and beautiful liturgy at Hartford's Cathedral of Saint Joseph on Sunday, October 30, 18 Saint Raphael Parish teens received the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Archbishop Leonard Blair presided at the Mass. Bishop Juan Betancourt was the concelebrant.

After the proclamation of the Gospel, Father John presented the Saint Raphael candidates to the Archbishop, who prayed for and laid hands on all those to be confirmed, including candidates from other parishes across the Archdiocese. Archbishop Blair and Bishop Betancourt anointed the candidates, who came forward with their sponsors to be sealed with the Holy Spirit.

Congratulations to the Saint Raphael confirmandi!

Charles Gabriel Becker
Emilio Juan Diego Contreras
Madison Francesca Frimpter
Christian Patrick Galligan
Aiden Genesis Hanks
Colin Luke Hanley
Tiffany Ann Ialeggio
Paige Cecilia Kantor
Lillian Gabriella Mangan
Michael Joseph Merchant
Caitlyn Faith Murphy
Evan Michael Murphy
Adrianna Laura Piccirillo
David Christopher Santos
Riley Theresa (of Calcutta) Simons
Frank Michael Stockmal
Cameron Jordan Benak-Upchurch
Andrew Sebastian Velasquez

Advent/Christmas Open House

Sunday, December 18 Any time from 1:00 - 2:30 p.m.

Saint Raphael Parish faith formation families and friends, please join us for this festive, seasonal open house! We have so many activities planned that we'll fill the Parish Center's halls and classrooms. Come see and celebrate!

- * Activity centers for people of all ages
- * Advent Wreath Crafts and Prayers
- * O Antiphons
- * Creating a Jesse Tree
- * Advent and Christmas Puzzles and Coloring Pages
- * Story of the Nativity (the Birth of Jesus)
- * Nativity Crafts
- * Nativity Children's Movie
- * Busted Halo Videos - for teens and adults
- * Christmas Cards for homebound parishioners and local nursing home residents
- * Blessings for Christmas Tree and Creche
- * And more!

The festivities will close with Christmas Carols around the Creche, and there will be snacks and gifts to go!

To help with our planning we ask you, please, to RSVP to Maria, atomasetti@snet.net or 203-988-8598 (voice or text) by Friday, December 16 at the latest. Thanks very much. Hope to see you there!



Help Us Stock Our Food Pantry Shelves

As temperatures fall and the price of food skyrockets (A head of lettuce was \$3.99 as we went to press.), the Saint Gabriel Food Pantry has suffered from a precipitous drop in donations as it seeks to provide for an increasing number of families in need. Please do what you can to help us in our mission to feed the hungry.

The last Sunday of every month is Donation Sunday, which falls, most appropriately this month, on Christmas Day, December 25. You may leave donations at Saint Ann's or at Saint Gabriel's. Our "most wanted" list includes foodstuffs; paper goods; kitchen, laundry and hygiene products. Gift cards are perfect, always welcome.

pasta and pasta sauce, brownie mixes
cereal, tuna, peanut butter and jelly
condiments like ketchup and mustard
paper towels, bath and facial tissue
feminine hygiene products, bar soap
hand soap, shampoo, toothpaste
dishwashing liquid, laundry detergent.

For information, to make a donation or schedule an appointment, call 203-878-3075. Thank you very much.

Additional Confirmation Congratulations . . .

. . . to Robert Dowling, who was confirmed on Tuesday, November 8 during a 7:00 p.m. Adult Confirmation Mass at The Cathedral of Saint Joseph in Hartford. Archbishop Leonard P. Blair was the Principal Celebrant. God's warmest blessings, Robert, today and always.

Advent, Holy Days, Christmas Schedule, Heartfelt Thanks . . .

. . . and lots more in this issue. Let us prepare for the coming of our Savior, the infant born in Bethlehem, welcomed by the herald angels. Honor our patroness on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. Pray the Fatima Rosary. Enjoy Father Maroney's Advent reflections.



Don't miss the Christmas Fair or GIFT's Advent Open House and be sure to read the uplifting accounts on page 2 about generous parish giving. Thank you, everyone.

Explore the true meaning of family, congratulate our Confirmandi and help restock our food pantry, please.

May God bless you with joy and peace this Christmas.

The Parish Press

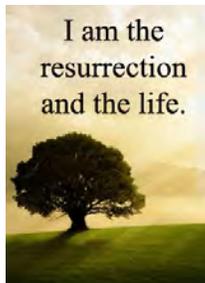
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*Let us welcome the Prince of Peace
into our hearts and homes this Christmas.*

In Memoriam



I am the
resurrection
and the life.

St. Raphael's mourns the recent loss of:

James Vancho Pallas Signarvic
Greg Kader Joan McGrath
Scott Kurowski Frances Hope

May the Lord welcome them into his loving embrace and may their families take comfort in knowing that we share in their sorrow.

We Welcome With Love . . .

. . . the newest member of our parish family:

Ryder John Swan

who was baptized on Saturday, October 29 at Saint Ann Church. May God bless you, Ryder, all the days of your life.



Saint Raphael Parish Website
<https://saintraphaelmilford.org>

Bereavement Support Meeting Sunday, December 11 at 2:00 p.m.



The holidays can be particularly difficult for those who are grieving. If you are struggling because of the death of someone you love we invite you to meet with our Bereavement Support group, on Sunday, December 12, at 2:00 p.m. in the Saint Ann's Children's Chapel.

Sharing your sorrow in this prayerful and confidential setting may bring you some comfort. Please call Joanne (203-877-4020) for additional information.

Submit *Parish Press* Info by December 9

The information deadline for the January 2023(!) issue of *The Parish Press* is Friday, December 9 (early deadline because of the holiday).

Kindly send your news, notes, comments and photos to our editorial offices (parishpress06460@gmail.com) or call Ann Eden (203-874-8744). Thank you.

A Journey Unfolding: The Mystery of Trusting God

Parishioner Cheryl Price Morgan's spiritual memoir, due to be published this month, is "a book both Jesus and St. Thérèse of Lisieux (the Little Flower) have been prompting me to write since the late 1980s." Cheryl's very personal memoir, written for "people of all faiths or of no faith," will be available soon on Amazon, free to Kindle Unlimited subscribers, for purchase in hard copy and Kindle. formats.

Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God Sunday, January 1

**Confessions: Saturday, December 31
3:00 - 3:30 p.m., Saint Ann Church**

Holy Day Masses

**8:00 and 11:00 a.m. at Saint Gabriel's
9:30 a.m. at Saint Ann's
(No Vigil Mass on New Year's Eve)**

