



The Parish Press

Newsletter of Saint Raphael Parish Family
Milford, Connecticut

March 2023



SAINT RAPHAEL PARISH LENTEN RETREAT

FOLLOWING JESUS
INTO THE DESERT

REFLECTIONS - FR. MAURICE MARONEY
MUSIC - SAINT ANN CHOIR

PART ONE
SUNDAY • MARCH 12 • 4 PM
SAINT GABRIEL CHURCH

PART TWO
MONDAY • MARCH 13 • 7 PM
SAINT ANN CHURCH

Lent at Saint Raphael Parish

We have set out on our Lenten journey marked with the ashes of repentance. This is our desert experience, a time for reflection and preparation. During Lent we are called to deepen our spiritual lives through prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

Follow Jesus Into the Desert

Father Maroney and the Saint Ann Choir will present an afternoon and an evening of music and reflections on Sunday and Monday, March 12 and 13, leading us prayerfully to follow Jesus into the desert. Please note the details at left.

Praying the Stations

From the earliest days, followers of Jesus would trace the route of his passion from the site of his trial before Pilate to his death on Calvary. Egeria, a 4th century pilgrim, wrote an account of Holy Week in Jerusalem that included making certain stops along that route. During the Middle Ages, "pilgrims" unable to travel to the Holy Land brought the stations to their home churches. In 1731, Pope Clement XII set the number of stations at 14. Many station programs today include a 15th Station, the Resurrection of Christ.



Stations of the Cross

Fridays at 3:00 p.m.
Saint Ann Church

March 3
Stations for Peace

March 10
According to St. Matthew

March 17
All of You Drink of This

March 24
For Today's Disciples

March 31
Mary's Way of the Cross

Teen-Led Stations
for people of all ages

Friday, March 10
7:00 p.m.

Saint Ann Church
(livestreamed)

Friday, March 31
7:00 p.m.

St. Gabriel Church



Lenten Confessions
Monday Evenings
6:00 - 6:30

March 6 and March 20
Saint Ann Church

March 13 and March 27
Saint Gabriel Church

(In addition to regular
Saturday confessions)

Why do we call them Stations? Stations are stops along a route. We pause at each station to think about what Jesus endured along his route and what it means for us and our salvation.

The traditional time for Stations, 3 o'clock on Friday afternoon, is based on the Gospel accounts of Jesus' death. Saint Raphael will have Stations at that traditional time at Saint Ann Church. They will be livestreamed at the parish website www.saintraphaelmilford.org for anyone unable to join us and remain available (under *Previous Broadcasts*) for later viewing. On two Friday evenings - schedule at right - parish teens will lead Stations of the Cross for people of all ages, including children. Please come and pray with us.



Giving Alms

Almsgiving, donating money or material goods to the poor or performing other acts of charity, is one of the three pillars of Lenten practice. Giving alms is an act of charity, one that allows us to step outside of ourselves and focus on the needs of others.

Donations to Catholic Services Rice Bowl, as but one example, can help change the lives of the poor here and around the world. Cardboard CRS Rice Bowls are available at the church doors and at GIFT sessions. Giving alms, in whatever format, is a spiritual discipline that can lead to a deeper union with Jesus and establish bonds of community.

Lenten Supper Menu

Fish and Chips or
Mac and Cheese

Cole Slaw

Dessert

Coffee, Tea, Juice
and Soft Drinks

You are Cordially Invited to the Parish Lenten Supper Friday, March 24, 6:00 p.m. in the Parish Center

Come and share a Lenten meal with the parish family on Friday evening, March 24 at six o'clock in the Parish Center. Enjoy fish and chips (or mac and cheese) and gather with the Saint Raphael community of faith as we approach the final weeks of our Lenten journey. Look for coloring sheets and brief reflections on each table, and listen as Father John shares his thoughts as we prepare for the Triduum and the joy of Easter Sunday.

Tickets (\$10 for adults; \$5 for children under 10) will be sold after Masses at both churches, beginning the weekend of March 4/5. We look forward to seeing you.

Parishioners Have Asked:

Why Are We Praying for Priestly Vocations?

Auxiliary Bishop Juan Miguel Betancourt Offers an Explanation

“Why pray only for vocations to the priesthood?” some folks have asked. “How about religious, Sisters and Brothers who have been called to the Consecrated Life?” Saint Raphael’s parishioners must not be the only ones who have raised those questions.

In a column that appeared in the January/February issue of the Catholic Transcript Bishop Juan Miguel offered a clear and concise explanation.

The decline in the number of priests, the bishop wrote, is “one of the greatest challenges we face in [the Archdiocese of Hartford.] We lament the fact that last year there were no ordinations in the archdiocese.”

He spoke of the fact that our priests “stretch themselves and their schedules.” They celebrate numerous Masses each weekend, hear confessions, anoint the sick, preside at funeral Masses and are “pulled in many other directions.” A priest who overextends himself, as the bishop points out, “can quickly experience burnout, sickness and a strained relationship with God, his bishop and the people he serves.”

These are just some of the reasons for this year’s focus on “asking the Lord for more priests.” It is good, of course, to pray for all vocations, but a “most immediate need is an increase of priestly vocations here in our archdiocese. *The priesthood is essential for the sacramental life of the Church; without the priest, we would be without the Eucharist, the Mass.*” (Emphasis added.)

“May God answer our prayers,” the bishop wrote in closing, “and bless you for all you do to promote priestly vocations.”



The Men of Saint Joseph: Better Men Through Christ Inspiring Men to be Spiritual Leaders

Saint Raphael’s first-ever Mini Ministry Fair was held in conjunction with Coffee And the weekend of February 11th and 12th. As parishioners sipped and socialized John Marmolejo spoke about The Men of Saint Joseph, a ministry of prayer and encouragement that is open to all the men of the parish who are over 18 years old.

The ministry is, in fact, one Chapter of many in 23 of our 50 states and in 5 other countries around the world. According to their website, <https://www.menofstjoseph.com>, “The Men of St. Joseph is an association of Christian men, united under the Catholic Church, who meet weekly to pray together and encourage each other to be the spiritual leaders of their families. The purpose of the Men of St. Joseph is to instill holiness in men and facilitate spiritual leadership in family and community life.” A less formal blurb on the website reads, “We are the Men of St. Joseph, a group of Catholic guys dedicated to being the spiritual leaders of our families while becoming the best versions of ourselves.”

Our chapter meets on Tuesday evenings at Saint Gabriel Parish Hall from 7 until 8:15. As John explained, “during the first half hour we “recite Vespers (Evening Prayer), sing a Hymn, read 3 Psalms and add some petitions.” After a coffee break the meeting resumes with the readings for the following Sunday Mass and a look into some Scriptural commentaries, after which the men share their own reflections. All meetings begin and end with a prayer to Saint Joseph.

John has extended an open invitation to men of the parish who “seek to grow in holiness, encounter fellowship, love for Scripture and spiritual insight. These are some of the outcomes any participant should expect. Families will greatly benefit as well when men pursue a more committed marriage and family life.” Remember, men: Tuesday nights, 7 o’clock, Saint Gabriel Parish Hall. No strings attached. Questions? Please contact John Marmolejo: 203-375-2912 or jmarmolejo@snet.net.



Join Fellow Saint Raphael Parishioners For the Rally and March in Hartford

**2nd Annual CT March for Life
Wednesday, March 22, 2023**

12 Noon - Rally at the Capitol

**1:00 p.m. - March for Life
around Bushnell Park**

March for Life organizers invite you to be part of the biggest pro-life advocacy event in Connecticut history. Your presence will make a statement in support of life and send a resounding message of love and support for the unborn and their mothers to members of the state legislature as they come to Hartford for that day’s session.

If you would like to travel to the rally with other Saint Raphael parishioners, please reach out to Lisa D’Avignon at 203-435-7691 (text or call). Lisa is also available at lisa.davignon@usi.com

As Pope Saint John Paul II has written, “The life of every individual, from its very beginning, is part of God’s plan.” (*The Gospel of Life*, 44).



GIFT Sacramental Program Dates

First Communion

Learning Session #2

Saturday, March 4
10:00 a.m.-12:00 noon
(Weekday evening make-up will be scheduled.)

Church and Sacristy Tour Date Options

Saturday, March 11
10:00 a.m.-12:00 noon
Saint Gabriel Church
or

Saturday, March 25
1:00 - 3:00 p.m.
Saint Ann Church

Learning Session #2 and church/sacristy tour required for children with parent/guardian.

Confirmation

Living the Moral Life

Sunday, March 5
1:00-2:30 p.m.

or

Tuesday, March 7
6:30-8:00 p.m.

Required for candidates

All sessions at Parish Center
501 Naugatuck Avenue.

March GIFT Sessions: Catholic Social Teaching

Whatever our differences - national, racial, economic, ethnic or ideological - we are one human family. We are our brothers' and sisters' keepers, wherever they may be. In this shrinking world, loving our neighbor has global dimensions. The virtue of solidarity is, at its core, the pursuit of justice and peace. The words of Pope Paul VI, spoken in 1972, still ring with truth today: "If you want peace, work for justice." The Gospel calls us to be peacemakers. Our love for all our sisters and brothers demands that we promote peace in a world seemingly consumed by violence and conflict.

"Because we have been gifted with God's peace in the risen Christ, we are called to our own peace and to the making of peace in our world. As disciples and as children of God, it is our task to seek for ways in which to make the forgiveness, justice and mercy, and love of God visible in a world where violence and enmity are too often the norm." (#55 Challenge of Peace, USCCB, 1983).

This GIFT session is required for teens in our Confirmation programs with a parent/guardian and encouraged for all families registered in our GIFT program. This is also an open invitation for all parishioners to join us on March 26th or 28th. Please come as our guest - even if you did not register for GIFT this year. We will begin inside Saint Ann Church and then move to the Parish Center for age-appropriate learning sessions (families with children through grade 4; children in Grades 5/6; teens in Grade 7 or older; and adults). Please contact Maria Tomasetti atomasetti@snet.net or 203-988-8598, (voice or text), if you have questions or would like additional information.

Stellar - Shine Jesus' Light

Summer VBS Camp July 24-28

Register your 4-11 year old space travelers for Stellar and send them on a cosmic quest where they'll have a blast shining Jesus' light to the world.

To register or for additional information contact Maria, as above. And travelers, be prepared to launch into an out-of-this-world adventure!

Caring for the Sick – Eucharistic Visits for the Homebound



Please be aware of the very special parish ministry of Eucharistic visits for the homebound. These visits continue the Church's ancient pastoral practice of visiting the sick.

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion regularly bring Eucharist to the elderly, the sick, the infirm, parishioners who are unable to attend Mass because of illness or injury. These visits are available on a short-term basis, during rehab or recovery from illness, for example, or long-term, for more chronic conditions or for the elderly.

To arrange for a Eucharistic visit for yourself or for a loved one, please contact Maria Tomasetti (as above), Pat Pritchard (203-283-7344) or Monica in our Parish office (203-874-0634 X17).

Lenten Suggestion: Fast in Support of the Food Pantry

Fasting from chocolate, dessert or dinner out this Lent? Turn your fasting into a work of mercy by donating the money you would have spent to the food pantry, perhaps in the form of a ShopRite gift card.



Car Donations Benefit the Parish New Car Donation Company (CARS)



Saint Raphael's is now working with CARS (Charitable Adult Rides & Services) for car (or motorcycle, motor home, even boat) donations.

CARS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that helps thousands of nonprofit organizations in the U.S. and Canada.

To start the vehicle donation process, you can go to our Saint Raphael Parish, Milford donation page, <https://careasy.org/nonprofit/saintraphaelparish> or call 855-500-7433. The parish will receive 75% of the proceeds of the car sale after fees. The CARS organization will keep 25% to operate the program. Questions? Please reach out to Maria, whose contact information appears above.

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

Friday, March 17
is Saint Patrick's Day

A Great Day for the Irish!

(and isn't everybody just a little bit Irish on Saint Patrick's Day?!)



Lenten March: Prayer, Fasting, Almsgiving

Our Lenten journey, which began in February, continues through the entire month of March. We encourage you to check the weekly bulletin for suggestions to make your journey more meaningful.

L Choose to fast, perhaps, from gossip and from grudges. Pray for your enemies, for the person who has hurt you most deeply. Give alms by giving of yourself, reaching out in kindness with a note, a card, a phone call to the hurting and the homebound.

Our March calendar is filled with Lenten opportunities - Stations of the Cross, an afternoon/evening retreat, the Friday night Lenten supper (details inside) and eight o'clock morning Mass, every weekday except Wednesday.

May you have a blessed, fruitful Lent.

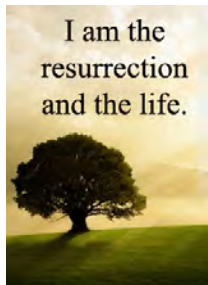
The Parish Press

A Publication of Saint Raphael Parish
Milford, Connecticut
Editor: Ann K. Eden
Production Staff: Lou Eden, Nancy Vai
Printing: Graphic Image, Milford, CT

SAINT RAPHAEL PARISH
Saint Ann Church Saint Gabriel Church
501 Naugatuck Ave.
Milford, CT 06460-5048

NON PROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
MILFORD, CT
PERMIT NO. 362

In Memoriam



I am the
resurrection
and the life.

St. Raphael's mourns the recent loss of:

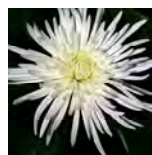
Madeline Mattera Lily F. Ryan
John F. Morgan Martha Tynan
Katherine Banyay Donald Walkley
Lawrence Meehan Jeannette Aronson
Patricia Fabian Barbara Johnson

Rev. John Lavorgna

The victims of the devastating
earthquake in Turkey and Syria

May they rest in eternal peace in the splendor of heaven.

Bereavement Support Meeting Sunday, March 12



If you are grieving the death of a loved one please consider meeting with our Bereavement Support group. You may find consolation in sharing your fears and concerns with others who have known the pain of loss. The group will meet on Sunday afternoon, March 12, at 2 o'clock in the Saint Ann's Children's Chapel. You may call Joanne (203-877-4020) for additional information.

April Parish Press Info Due March 10

Information for the April newsletter is due in our office by Friday, March 10. Please send your news, notes, photos and comments to parishpress06460@gmail.com or call Ann Eden (203-874-8744). Thank you.

**Spring Ahead! Adjust Your Clocks!
Daylight Saving Time Begins on March 12**

We Welcome With Love . . .

. . . the newest member of our parish family:

Evelyn Audrey Mendelssohn

Evelyn was baptized on Sunday, February 19 at Saint Gabriel Church. May God bless you, Evelyn, and keep you always in his tender care.



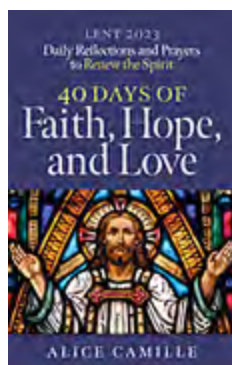
March 11/12 Is Coffee And Weekend

Come meet the family, that's the parish family, at Coffee And after weekend Masses March 11th and 12th. We'll be serving hot and cold beverages and scrumptious treats in the new-look Parish Hall at Saint Gabriel's and at the Parish Center.

The parish Card and Gift Shop will be open at Saint Ann's, where you can also order or purchase Scrip cards for a wide variety of both local and online retailers. All Scrip purchases help to support Saint Raphael Parish.

Be Sure to Take a Lenten Booklet

Copies of Alice Camille's *40 Days of Faith, Hope, and Love*, a gift for you from the parish, are available at the church doors and on the window sills. This guide for your Lenten journey is rich with daily reflections and prayers to renew the spirit.



When Fr. Joe Sica's booklet sold out early we were fortunate to find an inspirational replacement.