



The Parish Press

Newsletter of Saint Raphael Parish Family
Milford, Connecticut

April 2023



Holy Week

Easter Triduum Saint Ann Church

April 6

Holy Thursday

Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper
7:00 p.m.

Adoration before the Blessed Sacrament
until 10:00 p.m.

April 7

Good Friday

The Celebration of the Lord's Passion
3:00 p.m.

April 8

Holy Saturday

Blessing of the Easter Food
12 Noon

The Easter Vigil in the Holy Night
8:00 p.m.

April 9

Easter Sunday

Mass of the Lord's Resurrection
8:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.
Saint Gabriel Church
9:30 a.m.
Saint Ann Church



He is Risen!

A Journey to Rejoicing

As April begins we are nearing the end of our Lenten journey. Through prayer, fasting and almsgiving we've worked to extend ourselves in love and draw closer to God.

The most difficult and most sublime part of the journey lies just ahead. The joyous Hosannas of Palm Sunday will give way within days to the crowd's angry "Crucify him!" After the agony and humiliation of carrying his cross to Golgotha, Jesus will be nailed to that cross. He will die a criminal's death and be buried. Then, "early on the morning of the first day of the week," he will rise triumphant from the grave. The journey that began in ashes will end with rejoicing.

The summit of the liturgical year is the Easter Triduum, which begins with the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday, continues on Good Friday and reaches its high point in the Easter Vigil. Celebrated over three days, the Triduum is "liturgically one day," celebrated most appropriately in one church only. Last year we observed the Triduum at Saint Gabriel Church. This year we will celebrate "the emotional heart of the Church year" at Saint Ann's.



Rice Bowls and the Joy of the Resurrection

Since Lent began parishioners of all ages have been making simple sacrifices - giving up candy, skipping the afternoon latte, passing on dessert or that new pair of sneakers - and putting the money they would have spent into a cardboard "rice bowl" to support Catholic Relief Services. These simple actions lift up the poor and vulnerable who need our help, in Connecticut and around the world. Our sacrifices help us to experience, in a very small way, Christ's suffering, and they lead us to the joy and wonder of his resurrection.

When your Rice bowls are full, here are ways to turn them in:

- *Bring them to April's GIFT sessions
- *Bring them to any weekend Mass during April (or return donations in a labeled envelope)
- *Write a check, payable to Saint Raphael Parish, with CRS Rice Bowl on the Memo line and drop it into the collection basket this month.
- *Give online at crsricebowl.org/give.

75% of your CRS Rice Bowl donations support the work of Catholic Relief Services around the world. 25% remain in the Archdiocese of Hartford for local hunger and poverty alleviation efforts. Thank you for your kindness and your Lenten sacrifice.

Fresh Vegetables for the Food Pantry, Grown in Our Own Parish Garden?

The project is underway! What began last year with the seed of an idea is starting to take shape behind the former Saint Ann rectory on Naugatuck Avenue. The impetus: the need for fresh vegetables for the 20 or more families the Saint Gabriel Food Pantry feeds each week. The site: mostly sunny and home already to our flourishing Pollinator Garden. Father John, we're told, gave the project a green light (very appropriate!); Elizabeth Simonetti staked out a 30x20' plot, and sent out a plea for a roto-tiller. Riverview Lawn Service responded: The food pantry is "such a good cause" Riverview will do the work at no charge! We thank them for their wonderful generosity.

Next on the garden's most needed list: seeds, especially cucumbers, beans, hard squash (acorn, butternut, etc.) , peppers, collards, lettuce, tomatoes, peas, zucchini and yellow squash. If you can help, look for seed donation boxes in the vestibules of both churches. If you would like to be a part of this exciting new parish venture, reach out to Elizabeth at elizabethsimonet@mindspring.com. With sunshine, good soil, spring rain, attentive gardeners and the providential care of Saint Isidore the Farmer, our garden's patron, we're hoping for a bumper crop of delicious, healthy vegetables.

The Question of Cremation: *Can a Catholic be cremated?*

Many Catholics remain uncertain about the Catholic Church's position on cremation. The practice was once prohibited. Since 1963, however, the Church has permitted cremation but insists that the cremated remains (the ashes) be treated with the same respect given to the human body from which they come. This includes the use of a worthy vessel to contain the ashes, the manner in which they are carried, the care and attention to appropriate placement and transport.

The celebration of the Funeral Liturgy, including Mass, is permitted for a cremation. Before the Mass begins a small table or stand will be set up in the church where a casket would be placed. The family can carry the remains in procession and place them on the table, or the vessel can be placed on the table or stand some time before Mass begins.

When a Catholic family chooses cremation for a loved one, it is important to maintain dignity and respect when it comes to the final disposition of the ashes. The Church stresses that the ashes must be treated as a body would be. They should be reverently interred in a burial plot or entombed in a columbarium (a room, building, or wall with niches where funeral urns are stored). The burial or entombment bears witness to our continued care and reverence for the deceased and our trust and expectation that God in his mercy will raise the dead to new life.

The ashes should not be divided among family members, nor kept in one's home. The Church does not permit the scattering of ashes on land, in the air, or at sea. Scattering does not offer proper reverence to the mortal remains of a Christian and does not reflect the theological symbolism of placing remains in a burial tomb in anticipation of the resurrection. Nor should ashes be preserved as pieces of jewelry or mementos of any kind.

The burial of the mortal remains of the faithful departed in cemeteries or other sacred places encourages family members and the whole Christian community to remember and pray for the dead. The Church considers the burial of the dead one of the corporal works of mercy.



Travel to Amish Country and Sight & Sound Theater August 14-16

Board a spacious motorcoach at 8 a.m. in Milford and head out for a 3-day, 2-night adventure in the heart of Pennsylvania Dutch Country. Take in a show at Magic & Wonder Theater, enjoy the Amish Experience and visit Kitchen Kettle Village before you start home.

The highlight of your trip, included in the price you pay, might well be Sight & Sound Theatre's production of *Moses*, live on stage. Experience one of the Bible's most epic stories as Moses comes to life with massive sets, special effects and live animals in this original stage production, given rave reviews as "spectacular entertainment."

Make your reservations this month - Cindy's been fielding a lot of calls. \$75 is due upon signing, with final payment due on June 7.

Some details posted at right, call Cindy for additional information or go to <https://www.diamondtours.com/Join-Tour/2001184>. Enjoy!

Congratulations to Saint Joseph Medal of Appreciation Recipients, Lou and Ann Servideo!

In a beautiful and touching ceremony on Sunday afternoon, March 19, Archbishop Leonard Blair presented some 200 volunteers with the Saint Joseph Medal of Appreciation, honoring those who have given selflessly of their time and talent to their parishes. Congratulations to Lou and Ann Servideo, who were honored this year.

Born and raised in Stamford, Lou and Ann have been parishioners since 1985. Lou, an Army Vietnam veteran, is a U.S. history buff who collects comic books. Ann, an animal lover, "likes to help others." They cherish granddaughters Molly and Mandy and "love doing things with them."

Lou has served as Pastoral Council Chair, as an usher and Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion, heads the Social Gathering Team and organized a Work Task Force for small projects. Ann has worked on the Advent and Lenten meals and our *Celebrate Saint Raphael* breakfasts. Both Lou and Ann have been part of Coffee And, the Christmas Fair and have been delivery elves for the Christmas Giving Tree. The letter from the Archdiocese about the medal came as a surprise to both of them.

"Thoughts to share?" our reporter asked. Ann: "Take the time to talk with fellow parishioners, get to know them better, work together." Lou: "Be kind, respectful of others. Try to understand any differences you have with each other."

Thank you, Lou and Ann, for serving Saint Raphael Parish so faithfully and so well. May God bless you always.



Lou and Ann Servideo with Archbishop Blair

Sight & Sound Trip Details

Monday-Wednesday, August 14-16
\$422 per person, double occupancy
(Add \$75 for single occupancy)

2 nights lodging in Lancaster, PA area
4 meals: 2 breakfasts, 2 dinners

Admission to *Moses*, Magic and Wonder Theater, the Amish Experience and more
Info: Cindy Sissick (203) 874-0746



April's GIFT Sessions: Catholic Social Teaching Care for God's Creation

Earth Day falls on the 22nd of this month, a perfect time for our GIFT sessions to explore Care for God's Creation, another theme of Catholic Social Teaching.

The book of Genesis tells us that "the Lord God settled man in the garden of Eden to cultivate it and care for it." When we steward this wondrous gift we show our respect for its Creator. Care for the earth, then, is not simply an Earth Day slogan; it is a requirement of our faith.

We are called to protect God's people and our planet, living our faith in relationship with all of God's creation. We cannot ignore the moral and ethical dimensions of this environmental challenge. As Pope Francis has written, "Creation is a gift, a wonderful gift that God has given us, so that we care for it and use it for the benefit of all, always with great respect and gratitude."

We invite parishioners and friends of all ages to "gift" us with your presence at either session this month (schedule at left). Come and explore with us why and how we can help take care of all creation. We offer age-appropriate learning sessions for families with children through grade 4, children in grades 5 and 6, teens in Grade 7 or older, and adults. Questions? Please contact Maria Tomasetti atomasetti@snet.net or 203-988-8598, (voice or text). We hope to see you there!

Sunday, April 23
12:30-2:15 p.m.

or

Tuesday, April 25
6:30-8:15 p.m.

Beginning inside
Saint Ann Church

GIFT Sacramental Program Dates

First Communion Families

Learning and Praying the Rosary

Tuesday, April 18

or

Thursday, April 20
6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Parish Center Classrooms
501 Naugatuck Avenue.



T4S

Spring Project Meeting

Tuesday, April 4

6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

Attention, parish teens and friends in grades 7-12! We invite you to join us for our Spring Project meeting on Tuesday, April 4 from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. in a Parish Center classroom at the Saint Ann campus, 501 Naugatuck Ave.

We'll be working on Spring service projects including:

- * Easter cards and filling gift bags
for our homebound parishioners
- * Handmade Easter gifts for parish children

Plan to be with us for pizza and conversation. We'll follow up with these Easter service projects, fun to do and very much appreciated. Questions? Please contact Maria (as above). Thanks. Hope you can be there.

Patricia Sci Commissioned as Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion

On Sunday, March 19, during the 9:30 Mass at Saint Ann Church, Patricia Sci was commissioned as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion. In this ministry, Father John explained, Pat must "be an example of Christian living, strive to grow in holiness and be especially observant of the Lord's command to love your neighbor." Pat's husband Keith, daughter Katelyn and Penelope, her infant granddaughter looked on proudly as Pat resolved to "administer the Holy Eucharist with utmost care and reverence." Congratulations, Pat. May God bless you abundantly in your ministry.



Patricia Sci

Spring Visit to Four Corners

Saturday, April 29, 11 a.m. to 12 noon

It's spring and the joyous sounds of birds singing is making everyone smile. Our parish songbirds will do the same for the residents of Four Corners RCF during our spring visit on Saturday, April 29, beginning at 11 a.m. We welcome adults, teens, children, people of all ages to join the Four Corners residents at 306 Naugatuck Ave, Milford for an hour of music, trivia, charades - lots of fun stuff! Come sing and play with us! Questions? Reach out to Maria (as above).



Registration in Progress for Summer VBS Camp Monday-Friday, July 24-28

Campers ages 4-11 will have a blast when they launch into a cosmic adventure as part of *Stellar! Shine Jesus' Light!*, this summer's exciting VBS camp. With the help of Bible memory buddies Cosmo, Ringo, Luna, Sol and Halley they will remember key Bible points:

- When life feels dark, shine Jesus' light!
- When people don't get along, shine Jesus' light!
- When good things happen, shine Jesus' light!
- When people are sad, shine Jesus' light!
- When people need help, shine Jesus' light!

Campers will love the music, too, catchy songs like *Shine His Light (Stellar!'s theme song)*, *Shine* and *God of the Stars*, that might become family favorites.

Monday through Friday sessions run from 9:00 a.m. until noon and include Bible adventures, all-star games, arts & crafts/imagination station, galactic snacks and more. Registration is ongoing, and the slots fill up quickly. To register or for further information call Maria (information posted above). Every day is a new adventure.

Alleluia, He is Risen!

As April begins we enter Holy Week: the *Hosannas* of Palm Sunday, the beauty of Holy Thursday's Last Supper liturgy, followed quickly by betrayal, agony and crucifixion. We wait, then, through Holy Saturday's "Mother of All Vigils" for the incredible joy of Easter, the greatest of all Sundays. Look inside for the Holy Week schedule, including the blessing of the Easter food on Holy Saturday.



Other news of note: parish recipients of the Saint Joseph Medal of Appreciation, a newly commissioned EMHC, groundbreaking for a parish vegetable garden, a planned motorcoach excursion to Amish Country, and more! Enjoy April's showers and birdsong and may God bless you with all the joys and beauty of the Easter season.

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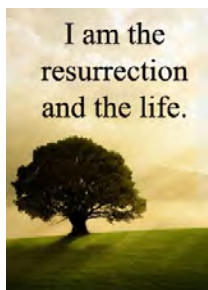
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SAINT RAPHAEL PARISH

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In Memoriam



St. Raphael's mourns the recent loss of:

Charles Brienza Walter Perry, Jr.
Christian Fricke Joseph Frank Honek
David Bobalki Thomas Protsko
Margaret Crow Elvira Prokoski
Benedict Joseph Michael McCormack
Ronald Kuhl John E. Reynolds
Rev. Joseph Montgomery
Elizabeth Brenenstuhl
Katherine Graves Hershey
Mary Anne J. O'Connell

May they rest forever in the arms of our merciful God.

Meet with Bereavement Support Sunday, April 2



The parish Bereavement Support group will meet on Sunday, April 2nd at 2:00 p.m. in the Saint Ann Children's Chapel. Because Easter falls on the second Sunday of April we have moved this month's meeting to the 1st Sunday of the month.

The Bereavement Support group offers comfort to those who are in mourning, helping them on the difficult journey from grief to healing. If you are struggling because of the death of someone you love you may find solace and encouragement in sharing your thoughts and feelings with others who have known the pain of loss. Call Joanne (203-877-4020) for additional information.

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

Enjoy Coffee And April 15/16

It's a great season for April's Coffee And - Easter season, planting season, tax season (if you're getting a refund!). No matter the season, it's always a fine time to get together with the parish family for hot and cold beverages, tasty snacks and genial conversation.

Stop by the Saint Ann Parish Center or Saint Gabriel's Hall after weekend Masses. If you're at Saint Ann's be sure to visit the Card and Gift Shop where you can purchase or order Scrip cards for a variety of local and online retailers. Hope to see you there!

May Parish Press Info Due April 14

Please submit your news, notes, comments and photos for the May newsletter by Friday, April 14. Send them to parishpress06460@gmail.com or call Ann Eden (203-874-8744). Thank you.

Help Decorate Saint Ann's for Easter!

Saturday, April 8 (Holy Saturday), 9:00 a.m.
No experience necessary. All are welcome!

Special Events on the Parish Calendar

May Crowning, Sunday, May 14

Following the 9:30 Mass at Saint Ann's
Before the 11 o'clock Mass at Saint Gabriel's

Saint Raphael Graduation Celebration Sunday, June 4

For Grade 8, high school, college/post secondary grads
Brunch following the 9:30 Mass