



The Parish Press

Newsletter of Saint Raphael Parish Family
Milford, Connecticut

April 2024



Spring at Last! Time for Cleaning, for Gardening, for Celebrating Our Risen Lord!



Parish

**The Tag Sale Is on the Calendar
(Saturday, May 18)
Donations Gratefully Accepted
(Starting Tuesday, April 7)**

The dilemma of spring cleaning: what to do with all the things you've culled out of your cellars, attics, garages and closets? (Wow, you were thorough!) MaryJo Downs and her tag sale crew to the rescue! Donate them to the parish tag sale, a major fundraiser, coming up on Saturday, May 18.

Beginning on Tuesday, April 7 MaryJo and her minions will accept your donations of new and/or gently used items: artwork; collectibles; jewelry; décor; kitchen, household and garden items; small furniture; toys; games; baby and toddler items; electronics; tools; sporting goods and *clean* clothes and books. The crew **can not** take glass items or large pieces of furniture - they simply do not sell.

Collection Schedule
April 7 - May 9
Tuesdays: 10 a.m. - Noon
Thursdays: 5:30 - 7:00 p.m.
Parish Center Entrance
Donations accepted thru May 9

Tag Sale: Saturday, May 18
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Saint Ann Campus
501 Naugatuck Avenue

The team needs volunteers to set up (Monday, May 13, starting at 6 p.m.), monitor tables and serve as greeters. If you can help please call MaryJo at 203-710-0471 or 203-882-0695 - you will *hear* her smile over the phone - or drop her an email at maryjodowns@gmail.com.

Thank you very much!

GIFT Easter Celebration
All Families with Children and Teens
Friday, April 12, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

All GIFT Families with Children and Teens are invited to our GIFT Easter Event on Friday evening, April 12. Please join us in the Saint Ann Parish Center between 6:00 and 8:00 p.m. as we continue to celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus during the Easter Season, which we will continue to do until the Feast of Pentecost on May 19! This April 12th event is also open to families with young children who have not yet registered for our GIFT faith formation program. Please join us!

In addition to a pizza dinner and snacks the evening's festivities will include:

- An Easter egg hunt!
- Easter crafts, including a *He is risen!* craft
- Easter cookie decorating
- Easter puzzles
- An Easter cross bulletin board
- An Easter season service project for our ill and homebound parishioners



Please contact Maria (as on pg. 3) to sign up for this program. We want to be sure we have enough food, Easter eggs, and supplies for everyone!

Seed Time for the Food Pantry Garden

March was being March as we went to press, roaring like a lion and gifting us with cold, blustery winds, chilly rain and not-frequent-enough days of glorious sunshine. Welcome, April, seed time for our Food Pantry Garden, which supplies fresh vegetables for the 20 or more families the Saint Gabriel Food Pantry feeds each week.

Thanks to the hard work of many parishioners and the intercession of our garden's patron, Saint Isidore, we enjoyed great success last year. We're hoping for another bumper crop, and you can help! Please donate seeds: butternut squash, peppers, tomatoes, beans, peas, eggplant and others as listed in the weekly bulletin. Leave them by April 6 in the boxes marked "Seeds" in the church vestibules.



Work on the garden resumes at noon on April 6 when the crew will spread the topsoil that Grillo Services donated so generously back in February. Want to get your hands dirty as you reach out to serve the needy? Meet the crew on April's first Saturday behind the former Saint Ann rectory on Naugatuck Avenue. To learn even more about the Food Pantry Garden project, or to become a team regular, reach out to Elizabeth Simonetti at elizabethsimonet@mindspring.com.

Saint Isidore the Farmer, pray for us.

The SGC Would Like Your Input!

What social events - trips, tours, performances - would Saint Raphael parishioners like to see on the parish calendar? The Social Gathering Committee (SGC) wants to know and is asking for your input. Look for their survey of possibilities tucked into the bulletins the weekend of April 6/7. Check off your preferences, add your own ideas, and return the survey by Sunday, April 21.

Among the committee's suggestions: parties (New Year's Eve, St. Patrick's Day, Halloween); winery tours; local theater performances; historic Milford events; demonstrations by local artists/crafters, and many more.

SGC has proposed a list of events that will bring us together for memorable, fun times that we can enjoy as a parish family. Kudos to Arlene Lacerenza, who led the initiative for the survey.

Be sure to return your completed survey by the deadline. Let's see what the Saint Raphael social calendar will have to offer in the year ahead!

**Become a Member of the Saint Raphael
Social Justice/Human Concerns Committee
Make a Positive Difference for Others**

Social Justice/Human Concerns, one of the standing committees of the Pastoral Council, hopes more parishioners will join them as they strive to make a positive difference in the lives of people in need, in the parish and in the wider community. The Council's bylaws stipulate that responsibility for the committee and direct them also to work for changes in the structures of society which are oppressive.

The group ministers to the needy through various outreach initiatives: the Garden that supplies fresh vegetables to the Saint Gabriel Food Pantry, for example, (see page 1); working with professional partners to assist victims of domestic violence and exploring ways to reduce human trafficking and the suffering it causes.

A current focus is the passage of new legislation in Connecticut that will permit the installation of Safe Haven Newborn Devices through a program established to prevent illegal abandonment of newborn infants. (Details at <https://www.shbb.org/>). Also upcoming: The Kindness Project, a two-pronged effort to help incarcerated adults and their families.

Christ's words found in Matthew 7:21 are a guiding principle for the committee's efforts. *Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven.*

If you would like to be a part of this Christ-centered committee or if you need more information, please reach out to Wally Hauck: 203-874-8484 or wally@wallyhauck.com.

Most Needed Items for the Food Pantry

Instant potatoes, Knorr pasta and rice sides, cookies crackers, pudding, jello, ramen noodles, cereal hot chocolate packets, spaghetti sauce in jars laundry detergent (small), toilet paper

Please leave your generous donations in the vestibule of either church. Thank you for your kindness.

**Spring Visit to Four Corners Residential Facility
Saturday, May 4, 11 a.m. to 12 noon**

It's Spring! Time to restart our social visits to local health care facilities!

Please join us on Saturday, May 4, beginning at 11 a.m. for a Spring visit to Four Corners, 306 Naugatuck Ave, Milford. We welcome people of all ages - children, teens, and adults - to join us and the Four Corners residents for an hour of music and fun. There will be Spring charades, a sing-a-long in the front room with both old-time favorites and patriotic songs, as well as banter and conversation. Residents love connecting with old friends and making new ones!

We'll be scheduling other visits, ways to bring some sunshine, and our lilting voices, to brighten the day for people in health care facilities. Watch the newsletter and the weekly bulletin for updates.

Questions? Interested in joining us? Please contact Maria (as on page 3) and thank you!

Attention Members of the Class of 2024! Save the Date!!

The annual Saint Raphael Graduation Celebration is scheduled for Sunday, June 2. 11:00 a.m. Mass at Saint Gabriel Church, followed by a reception with lunch in the Saint Gabriel Hall. Hope to see you there!



**Thank You for Living Lent
with CRS Rice Bowl
Returning Your Lenten Alms**

Thank you for Living Lent with CRS Rice Bowl, using the CRS Rice Bowl program to guide your Lenten journey of prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Through our Lenten sacrifices and alms, we are helping to change the lives of people in need around the world and in our own Archdiocese of Hartford.

Here are some ways you can donate the money you collected through your Lenten sacrifices to Catholic Relief Services to help the poor.

* Bring your CRS Rice Bowl to any of our April GIFT faith formation sessions or to our Parish Office during regular office hours.

* Bring your CRS Rice Bowl to any weekend Mass in April. Or put your donations in a sealed envelope labeled CRS Rice Bowl, and put it in the collection basket.

* Write a check, payable to Saint Raphael Parish, with *CRS Rice Bowl* in the Memo line. Place the check in a sealed envelope, labeled CRS Rice Bowl, and drop it into the collection basket.

* You can also give on-line at crsricebowl.org/give

75% of your CRS Rice Bowl donations support the work of Catholic Relief Services around the world. The remaining 25% stays in the Archdiocese of Hartford for local efforts to alleviate hunger and poverty .



**More of *The Chosen*, Season 2
Coming April 7 and 28**

Sunday afternoons with *The Chosen* continue this month at the Saint Raphael Parish Center "Screening Room." Join us from 2:30 until 4:30 on April 7 for Episodes 5 and 6, *Spirit* and *Unlawful* and again on April 28 when we'll present Episodes 7 and 8, *Reckoning* and *Beyond Mountains*.

Come, and bring a friend. There is no admission charge. For additional information you may call Rose Cox (203-878-6427) or Cindy Sissick (203-874-0746), or email Maria (as on page 3).

GIFT Sacramental Program Dates

Confirmation

Church and Sacristy Tours

Sunday, April 14
12:30-2:00 p.m.
Saint Ann Church

or

Tuesday, May 7
6:30-8:00 p.m.
Saint Gabriel Church

First Communion Families

Learning and Praying the Rosary

Tuesday, April 16
6:30-7:30 p.m.

or

Thursday, April 25
6:30-7:30 p.m.
Saint Ann Parish Center
Classroom

GIFT - Growing in Faith Together - April Sacraments of Service: Marriage and Holy Orders

During April, GIFT participants will explore Marriage and Holy Orders, the two Sacraments of Service, often called Sacraments of Vocation. Couples who enter into Sacramental Marriage and men who are ordained through Holy Orders have a vocation: God has called them to share their lives with others in special ways.

The Christian community shares the joy of couples preparing to enter a new life together in the holy Sacrament of Marriage. Their sacramental commitment is a sign of God's love and faithfulness and an acknowledgement of the importance of God in the lives of both husband and wife. As part of this GIFT session we will learn more about the Sacrament of Marriage and how we are all called to be faithful witnesses of God's love and to provide support for married couples.

Through the Sacrament of Holy Orders baptized men are called to serve in the name and in the person of Christ, in the midst of the community. Holy Orders includes three levels, or degrees: the ordination of Deacons, of Priests and of Bishops. We will look closely at the sacrament's Rite of Ordination and consider the differences in the roles of Deacons, Priests and Bishops. We will also talk about the significance of the ministerial priesthood in the Catholic Church and in our lives. As part of this session we will discuss our role as members of the common or universal priesthood and how we are called to support ordained ministers in living out their call to be of service to the Church and to the world.

Sacraments of Marriage and Holy Orders

Sunday, April 21
12 Noon-2:15 p.m.

or

Tuesday, April 23
6:00-8:15 p.m.

Sessions (in the Parish Center) begin w/pizza for the first 30 minutes.

Lastly, we will learn about ways to support the vocations of marriage and the priesthood in our Saint Raphael Parish community. Since November we have offered the Prayer for Priestly Vocations after daily and weekend Masses. April 21 is the World Day of Prayer for Vocations, and we encourage our GIFT families to participate in the parish's Vocation Chalice program. This month's GIFT Home Kits will include materials for families to continue prayer, awareness and education about the vocations of marriage, the diaconate, priesthood and consecrated life at home.

For questions about GIFT reach out to Maria, atomasetti@snet.net or 203-988-8598 (voice or text).



Octavia Invites Young People Ages 4-11 to Come Camping This Summer!

Monday - Friday July 22 - July 26
9:00 a.m. to 12 noon

Saint Raphael Parish Center and Grounds

Come plunge beneath the waves for undersea adventures at our VBS camp, **SCUBA, Diving Into Friendship with God**. Swim in God's Word with Bible buddies Octavia, Tad, Finnley, Fisher and Waylon, who will help campers remember daily Bible points:

- Day 1: God is a friend who's real.
- Day 2: God is a friend who loves.
- Day 3: God is a friend we can trust.
- Day 4: God is a friend forever.
- Day 5: God is a friend for everyone.

Visit Activity Centers for Music/Dance, Crafts & Imagination, Reef Recreation and more. Snack on Tidal Treats and close out the week with Friday's *fin-tastic* finale, followed by a pizza lunch.

Parents and grandparents take note: Registration is open now for this summer's amazing underwater adventure. Suggested donation: \$25 per camper (\$5 per day). Camp scholarships are available. To register or for additional information contact Maria, as above.

A Timely Prayer from Saint Teresa of Avila

*Let nothing disturb you. Let nothing frighten you.
All things are passing away. God never changes.
Patience obtains all things.
Whoever has God lacks nothing,
God alone suffices.*

First Reconciliation

Congratulations to two young parishioners, Aurelia Putnam and Maksim Wojnarowicz, who came to Jesus for the first time in the Sacrament of Reconciliation earlier this year. Aurelia received the Sacrament on Saturday, January 27 at Saint Gabriel Church, Maksim on Thursday, February 8 at Saint Ann Church.

As you continue grow in your faith, Aurelia and Maksim, may you find comfort in the loving forgiveness of the Good Shepherd, who seeks out the lost. May God bless you always.



Preparation Program for Adult Confirmation This Month



The parish is planning to offer a Confirmation Preparation Program for adults beginning in early April.

Adults who have received the Sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist and are interested in preparing to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation should contact Maria, as above.

Our Alleluias Will Ring Out Until Pentecost Sunday, May 19

It is the Easter season. Christ is risen! We rejoice, singing our *alleluias* from now until the Feast of Pentecost on May 19. GIFT Families with Children and Teens will be singing and celebrating at this month's Easter Event.



Spring is definitely in the air! We're collecting seeds and spreading topsoil for the Food Pantry Garden. The Tag Sale team is preparing to accept your donations - the seldom used or perhaps long forgotten items that turned up during spring cleaning.

SGC wants your opinion, while our Social Justice/Human Concerns Committee hopes you will help them do God's will.

Details inside. Have a happy April!

The Parish Press

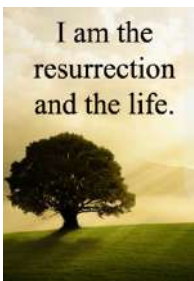
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We are an Easter people. Alleluia is our song!

In Memoriam



I am the
resurrection
and the life.

St. Raphael's mourns the recent loss of:

Kevin Morris	William Bennet
Vincent Brazeau III	Judith Capes
Brayden Heery	Sandra Bruder
Dr. Donald Gray	Anna Boynton
James Maroney, Jr.	

May God welcome them into the peace and happiness of his everlasting kingdom.

Bereavement Support Meeting Sunday, April 14



The parish Bereavement Support group will meet on Sunday, April 14 at 2:00 p.m. in the Saint Ann Children's Chapel. If you are struggling because of the loss of someone you love we invite you to be with us.

Allow us to share your burden and your memories, to listen to the story of the one you miss so much and to offer comfort in your loss. Please call Joanne (203-877-4020) for additional information.

Submit Parish Press Info by April 12

Send your news, notes, photos, comments and suggestions for the newsletter's May issue to our editorial office parishpress06460@gmail.com by Friday, April 12. Or you may call Ann Eden (203-874-8744). Thanks very much. We look forward to hearing from you.

We Welcome With Love ...

the newest members of our parish family,

James Conway
Johnny Belinda

James was baptized on Sunday, March 3 at Saint Gabriel Church. Johnny received the life-giving waters of Baptism on Sunday, March 17 at Saint Ann Church. May God bless you, James and Johnny, and keep you always in his tender care.



April 13/14 is Coffee And Weekend



Wend you way to Saint Gabriel's Hall or the Saint Ann Parish Center after Mass on Saturday, April 13 or Sunday, April 14. Sample the refreshments and enjoy your visit with the members of our amazing parish family.

Visit the Card & Gift Shop During Coffee And

Purchase Scrip cards (and help support the parish!) and look for quality, reasonably priced greeting cards for all occasions. The shop is located in the Saint Ann Parish library. Do stop in!

Also in April

Social Gathering Team

Tuesday, April 16
6:30 p.m.

Saint Ann Parish Center

K of C Evening Rosary

Thursday, April 25
6:30 p.m.

Saint Ann Parish Center

Saint Raphael Parish Website

<https://saintraphaelmilford.org>