



The Parish Press

Newsletter of Saint Raphael Parish Family

Milford, Connecticut

June 2024



Bryan Mercier

Pro-Life Night!

Tuesday, June 18, 7:00 p.m. Saint Ann Church

Bryan Mercier, Catholic author and apologist, will bring his dynamic presence and inspiring message to the parish on Tuesday, June 18.

As part of his presentation, *Pro-Life, Pro-Baby, Pro-Woman, Pro-Family!*, Bryan will share stories from real life that illustrate the beauty and necessity of life. He will discuss the realities of modern medicine, its effects on babies, women and families, its dismissal of the sanctity of life. A Question and Answer period will follow.

It is Deacon George's hope that Bryan's talk and his very personal Pro-Life stance will help motivate parishioners to support the parish's effort to build a strong Pro-Life ministry here at Saint Raphael's. As Christians, the deacon has said, we should be concerned for the lives of the unborn and their families, and, just as importantly, for the lives of the elderly, the infirm, the handicapped, and those who live on the fringes of society. We must recognize and protect the inherent dignity of all human life.

"Why We're Pro Life," the recently published booklet from Catholic Answers Press, is helping spread the word of the Pro-Life movement. Deacon George will make copies of the booklet available to parishioners the weekend of June 8/9, prior to our Pro-Life night.

To quote Deacon George, "Let Bryan's inspiring message move you to remember how deeply God cares for every one of his creatures, how much God loves every person, born and unborn." Please plan to be with us on June 18. After the presentation join us for refreshments in the Children's Chapel,



Busy June for K of C's Tinto Council

It's been a busy year for the Knights of Columbus Tinto Council, and it's winding down with a flurry of June activities.

Election of officers is on the agenda for the Council's regular monthly meeting on Thursday, June 13. Those chosen to serve will work over the summer to plan new initiatives for the months ahead.

The annual picnic for members and their families is on for Saturday, June 29 at Walnut Beach. This all-day and always popular event includes three meals served, games for the kids, both a DJ and a band. Tradition tells us that a good time will be had by all!

The Council will close out the month and the year with a Mass in honor of all deceased members on Sunday, June 30 at 11 o'clock at Saint Gabriel Church. The color guard will be in attendance. The Mass will be followed by a luncheon at Black Hawk Country Club in Stratford and the dedication of memorial stones.

Later that afternoon Council members will place the newly dedicated stones at the shrine of the Blessed Mother on the grounds of Saint Ann Church. The Council hopes that Seminarian Mitchell Kendrioski can be with us for both events.

Graduation Celebration Sunday, June 2

Please play a little Pomp and Circumstance to honor Saint Raphael Parish Class of 2024, eighth grade, high school and college graduates, on Sunday June 2. The grads and their families will pray together at Saint Gabriel's 11 o'clock Mass then enjoy a reception with lunch at the Saint Gabriel Parish Hall.



Look on page 3 for an impressive (and only partial!) list of what lies ahead for our Class of 2024. Additional information will appear in July's newsletter.

Warm congratulations to all the graduates. May God bless you with joy and much success as you move into the future.



Sip and Snack at Coffee And After Masses June 8 and 9

Stop by the Saint Ann Parish Center or Saint Gabriel Hall after Mass the weekend of June 8 and 9. Enjoy a refreshing drink, some tasty treats and a visit with some of the nicest folks we know, the members of the Saint Raphael Parish Family. The parish Card & Gift Shop will be open in the Saint Ann Parish Center. Check out their very nice assortment of quality greeting cards. (Hint: June 16 is Father's Day.)

June 23 Pork Roast Dinner Supports HomeFront

Make an early reservation for this tasty and traditional pork roast dinner, served at 3:30 on Sunday afternoon June 23 at Saint Gabriel Hall. Cost is \$15 (adults), \$5 (under 10). Tickets are available from the charming reservation specialists you'll meet at the doors of both churches.



The committee is asking for donations: new unwrapped items for the raffle table and finger desserts like cookies or cupcakes.

You will enjoy a great meal and support a great cause, HomeFront's one-day repair blitz for a local family in need, on the calendar for Saturday, September 14.

If you would like to volunteer to work on the HomeFront project please contact on site coordinator Carrie Nocerino at 203-218-0644.

Thank you very much.

Some Class of 2024 Graduates and Their Plans

College Graduates

Nicola Milovanov
University of New Haven
Bachelor of Science in Forensic Science
Concentration in Biology
Will attend George Washington University
to pursue a Master's in
Forensic Molecular Biology.

High School Graduates, Work Plans, Colleges, Intended Majors

Danielle D'Avignon
Amity Regional High School
Providence College
Psychology

Aiden McKernan
Jonathan Law High School
Pursuing the path for a career
as a firefighter.

Christopher Rickard
Jonathan Law High School
University of Connecticut
Mechanical Engineering

Antonio Salati
Jonathan Law High School
University of Mississippi (Ole Miss)
Finance

Julian Sevillano
Joseph A. Foran High School
University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Caden Simpson
Jonathan Law High School
Monmouth University in NJ
Will be on their Division I
track and field team.

Kiernan Wilson
Jonathan Law High School
Springfield College
Athletic Training

8th Grade Graduates, High Schools

Marcello Armellino
West Shore Middle School
Trumbull High School
Agriscience Program

Julian Ekeh
West Shore Middle School
Fairchild Wheeler Magnet High School
Aerospace/Hydrospace Engineering
& Physical Science Program in Bridgeport

Tristan Sevillano
Harborside Middle School
Joseph A. Foran High School

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



Donna's Creation Care Corner Delightful Dancing Honeybees

Bees - some of God's most amazing creatures! Once she has gathered pollen and nectar, for example, the foraging honeybee at left will *make a beeline*, the straightest, quickest route back to the hive, no detours, no sight-seeing.

Once inside she will let the other bees know about this excellent source of food she's found and how to get to it as quickly as possible. She doesn't phone, text or leave a voicemail - she dances! If she opts for the *round dance* she's letting the others know that the nectar and pollen are close, within 165 feet of the hive.

If, instead, she breaks into the more complex *waggle dance* she's sending a different message: not only the distance to but also the location of the really choice flowers. She communicates distance by waggling back and forth as she moves forward in a straight line; the longer her line, the farther the distance. The more time she takes to perform the dance, the farther away the flowering food.

The specific angle of a bee's *waggle dance* in relation to the sun establishes the food's location. Once outside the hive, the other bees check the position of the sun, then fly at the dance's very same angle to reach the coveted destination.

Because the Creator has equipped them with unique brain circuitry, bees don't need GPS! Let us marvel at God's handiwork and thank Him for bees, His tiny but awe-inspiring creatures.

Learn more about the fascinating language and dances of honeybees at <https://lifewithbees.com/how-do-bees-communicate>. Questions? Please make a *beeline* to your phone, computer or Ipad and contact Donna at dm.dimassa@prodigy.net or 203-444-4285.

Food Pantry Garden Update Successful May 11 Planting Day

The garden crew asked, and parishioners responded with generous donations of seeds and seedlings. for this year's garden. And on Planting Day, May 11, armed with trowels and enthusiasm, the crew got to work. Result? The peas, squash, tomatoes, eggplant, beans and peppers are in the ground, with the cucumber, broccoli, and hard squash seedlings close behind! Now let's pray for sunny skies, warm rain, and healthy plants.

We are looking for tomato cages. If you have some you no longer need, please leave them near the garden (behind the former Saint Ann rectory on Naugatuck Avenue). Like to join the crew? Need additional garden information? Reach out to Elizabeth Simonetti at elizabethsimonet@mindspring.com.

Enjoy Sunday Afternoons with *The Chosen* Season 3 Continues

June 9, Season 3, Episodes 3 and 4
Heal Yourself and *Clean, Part 1*

June 30, Season 3, Episodes 5 and 6
Clean, Part 2 and *Intensity in Tent City*

House lights go down at 2:30 in the Saint Raphael Parish Center. No charge for admission.

If you'd like to know more about this popular series call Rose Cox (203-878-6427) or Cindy Sissick (203-874-0746) or email Maria (atomasetti@snet.net). Come alone, with friends, with family. Everyone is welcome!





We Celebrate a First Communion Weekend

On one of two First Communion weekends, May 18/19, seventeen young people received Jesus in the Eucharist for the first time. The entire Saint Raphael parish family celebrated with them as they approached the Lord's table and received the Bread of Life. Love and congratulations to all the First Communicants.

Meadow Teresa Bottigliero
 Natalia R. Eusebio
 Gabriel Lawrence Forte
 Brayden James Jacob
 Rylan John Jacob
 Chloe Kendall

Jessie Elizabeth Kirkham
 Greyson Robert Lindsey
 Logan Maurutis
 Emmet Joseph Murphy
 Hudson Charles Murphy

Huxley Quinn
 April Quintero
 Marco Antonio Quintero
 Isabella Ariel Santos
 Magdalene Flora Twidwell
 Maksim Wojnarowicz

*A Prayer at
 First Communion*
*Jesus comes to you
 in Holy Communion
 to feed you,
 to love you,
 and to fill you
 with His grace.*
*May you
 always welcome
 His loving presence.*

What's Happening in the Saint Gabriel Church Vestibule? Renovation? Transformation?

However you describe the project that got underway on April 4 in the vestibule of that beautiful, venerable church on Broadway, the proper response to the work that's been done is "Wow! This looks great!" And there's more to come! Project manager Cathy Coda filed this report:

What's been done:

- *Bulletin boards cleared/removed *Wood areas: thorough cleaning/TLC
- *Wall plaques removed/in temporary storage (Plan: A future "Wall of Honor" in Parish Hall for display/preservation)
- *Walls and light fixture painted *New table in place/more modern look

What remains:

- *Tile floor: Professional cleaning *New floor mats *Small bulletin board hung
 - *File holders on walls for flyers, pamphlets, etc. *Electrical outlet installation
- *Note: Completion date depends on the time needed for floor tile installation. Fingers crossed for early June.

Cathy extended special thanks to Father Brinsmade for approving the project; to J. Toppin Painting. for his beautiful work, done at no charge; and to Richard Coda, chief sounding board and long-suffering floor glue chipper. (So that's what a former crew used to hang the original cork boards!) Sincere thanks also to Scott Nocerino for all things electrical, to John Marmolejo for trim work and to Cathy's fellow project managers, Elaine Bataille and Frances O'Neill. Beautiful work, everyone! We can share the joy of the Psalmist as he sang, *Let us go rejoicing to the house of the Lord!*



Latest Addition to the Children's Chapel Gallery *Theotokos of the Passion (Our Lady of Perpetual Help)*

Thanks to the kindness and generosity of parishioners Andy and Linda Biagioni, another striking piece of art now graces the walls of the Children's Chapel. The *Theotokos of the Passion*, one of the most recognized icons (images) of the Mother of God (Theotokos), is more familiar to Catholics as *Our Lady of Perpetual Help*. This type of icon, Hodegetria, depicts Mary pointing to her Son. Jesus looks toward Gabriel, who holds the cross and nails of His crucifixion. Michael, on the left, holds the spear, crown of thorns and the wine soaked sponge. The original 15th Century icon is permanently enshrined in the Church of Saint Alphonsus Liguori in Rome.

The Biagionis acquired their piece at an auction some 30 years ago. A determined Linda successfully "battled another buyer" and brought her prize home to Maryland. She also had a different, larger Theotokos (there are many images), a treasure from her Russian Orthodox grandmother.

Andy and Linda, both CT natives, had made a work-related move to Baltimore in 1989, but returned frequently to visit family and friends. In 2006 they "jumped at buying" an East Broadway condo, "a place of our own to stay." Upon retirement, with fewer reasons to stay in MD and wanting to spend more time with family, the Biagionis made Milford their permanent home. They "feel very welcome at Saint Raphael Parish" and "very happy" that their beautiful "auction icon" has also found a home. (Grandma's treasure will stay with them in the condo!) Thank you, Linda and Andy, for your special gift.

A bit of mysterious trivia: Ashley Kosa, our art restoration consultant, found an inscription on the back of the icon. *Original Made in 1872 From Mrs. Ann Duval to Miss Claudette Duval.* Framing, was done at Wm. A. Oktavec, Art Shop, 2400 Monument St., Baltimore 5, MD a shop that didn't open until late 1922. Hmm. Did someone want to maintain provenance?

Pastoral Council Members for 2024-2025	
Name	Through
Elaine Bataille	2027
Catherine Coda	2026
Terri Deveny	2025
Leo Dorsey	2026
Wally Hauck	2025
John Kirkham	2025
Frank Lacerenza	2026
Joyce Marlow	2026
Rose Marie Marmolejo	2027
Manfred Mohring	2027
Frances O'Neill	2027

Graduations, Renovations, A Pro-Life Presentation

All this and more during June at Saint Raphael Parish. Our annual Graduation Celebration is a first-weekend event, the vestibule renovations at Saint Gabriel's should be completed this month, while the Pro-Life presentation is a mid-month highlight.



The rose is featured here simply because of its stunning beauty, one of the many glorious gifts of God's creation.

Read about dancing bees, an addition to the Children's Chapel gallery and the joy of May's First Communions

We ask for God's blessings on fathers, grandfathers, stepfathers, coaches, mentors - all the men who provide love, support and guidance to our young people.

The Parish Press

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Happy Father's Day!

In Memoriam

St. Raphael's mourns the recent loss of:



Kimberly Haight Florence Stoeber
Oscar Bernales Nancy Christensen
Andrew J. Brose IV Yolanda Gaudette
Alphonse Maiorino, Jr.
Lucretia Blydenburg
Timothy Attolino, Sr.
Hedwig "Heidi" Seefeldt

May they enter eternal life in company with all the saints.

Bereavement Support Meets Sunday, June 9



If you have suffered a grievous loss and are struggling to find ways to cope, please think about meeting with our Bereavement Support Group. The journey from grief to healing can be difficult and painful. Let us offer what help we can in the prayerful quiet of the Children's Chapel on Sunday afternoon, June 9, at 2 o'clock. If you have questions or need additional information you may call Joanne (203-877-4020).

Early Parish Press Deadline Monday, June 10

Please submit your information for the newsletter's July issue by Monday, June 10. Send your news, notes, comments and photos to parishpress06460@gmail.com or call Ann Eden (203-874-8744). The staff looks forward to hearing from you. Thanks.

We Welcome With Love . . .

the newest members of our parish family,

Kali Kirkham
Rhoan Bruno

Kali was baptized in April at Saint Gabriel Church. Rhoan received the life-giving waters of Baptism on Sunday, May 19 at Saint Ann Church. May God bless and guide you, Kali and Rhoan, and keep you always close to his heart.



Love and Best Wishes

as you begin your married life together. . .



Justin and Lindsay (Milligan) Larkin
Anthony and Amber (Hawks) Samelwich

Justin and Lindsay were married at Saint Ann Church on Friday, May 3. Anthony and Amber exchanged wedding vows at Saint Ann's on Saturday, May 4. May the Lord in his goodness bless you with health, happiness and a deep and abiding love.

COR
Catholic Men's Group
Saturday, June 1
8:00 a.m.
Saint Ann Parish Center

Social Gathering Team
Monday, June 17
(Note the change.)
6:30 p.m.
Saint Ann Parish Center

Prayer & Worship Committee
Saturday, June 1
10:00 a.m.
Parish Library

K of C Evening Rosary
Thursday, June 27
7:00 p.m.
Saint Ann Parish Center