



The Parish Press

Newsletter of Saint Raphael Parish Family
Milford, Connecticut

January 2025



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

**Confessions: Saturday, December 28
3:00 - 3:30 p.m. Saint Gabriel Church**

Holy Day Masses

9:30 a.m. Saint Ann Church

11:00 a.m. Saint Gabriel Church

(No Vigil Mass on New Year's Eve)

Saint Ann Choir Christmas Concert

Sunday Afternoon, December 29

4:00 p.m. at Saint Ann Church



A holiday tradition continues at Saint Ann Church! On the Feast of the Holy Family the Saint Ann Choir offers our parish family and friends a gift, a concert of the beautiful music that expresses the joy of the season. Please plan to be with us. A child is born in Bethlehem. Let your hearts rejoice!

T4S To Host Annual Drive-Thru Saturday, January 25

11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Saint Ann Parking Lot

Saint Raphael's very active Teen for Service group (T4S) will mobilize again this year in support of the annual Souper Bowl of Caring, a grass-roots effort by young people to fight hunger and poverty in their local communities. The drive-thru, for non-perishable foods, paper goods and personal hygiene products, runs from 11:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, January 25 in the Saint Ann Parking Lot.



Please drive into the parking lot up to the glass doors of the Parish Center, then pop your car's trunk. Our smiling teens will unload your donations, then sort them for delivery to the Saint Gabriel Food Pantry and Beth-El Center, this year's recipient organizations. Please check January's weekly bulletins and the tables by the church doors for lists of the items each organization needs most. You will also find details that explain how the Food Pantry and Beth-El Center help our local community. We will also provide information for people who prefer to donate checks or food gift cards.

We will gratefully accept all non-perishable food items. And the drive-thru is not your only opportunity to make Souper Bowl of Caring donations. You may bring them to Saint Ann or Saint Gabriel Church any weekend during January or February.

The Souper Bowl of Caring is now in its 35th year. Since 1990 generations of young people across the country have come together, teaming up to make a powerful impact in the fight against hunger in their home towns and local communities. We thank you, as always, for your kind and generous support of this important program, one that is truly a corporal work of mercy. If you have questions, please reach out to Maria Tomasetti, atomasetti@snet.net or 203-988-8598 (voice or text). Thank you very much.



Mark Your New Calendars: January 18/19 the First Coffee And Weekend of the Year

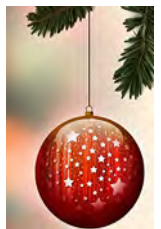
Coffee And resumes after Masses on the weekend of January 18/19. Stop in to the Saint Ann Parish Center or Saint Gabriel Hall after Mass for beverages and goodies. Sip, snack and share your stories from the holidays.

Did your teenager like the hoverboard? Have you tried it? The makeup, cosmetic bag and hair products - all from the right brand - must have gone over well with your tween and teen girls. Did anybody score tickets for the NCAA championship game on January 20th?

Enjoy our monthly social hour. See you in February!

Great Christmas Fair - Great Numbers, Too!

December's parish Christmas Fair was fun, festive and a good fundraiser. The Grinch was a greeter (festive, indeed!)- and the steady stream of fair-goers created a real holiday-shopping buzz. MaryJo Downs sent this note of thanks:



May I send a warm hug to each and everyone who helped make the Christmas Fair a success! The new addition - the Nativity Room - was very well received. Our guests really enjoyed the display - there were so many positive comments. Special thanks to all those who donated their nativity sets. Next year will be bigger and better!

Sales total, including Bakery, Card & Gift, Kitchen, Nativity Room, Tag Sale, Raffle Room and Vendors: \$6,521.10. Kudos to MaryJo and her hard-working team. Very well done!



Donna's Creation Care Corner
Composting - A Great Way to Start the New Year
(And the City of Milford has just the program for you!)



Composting. You've read about it, thought about it, decided you really should try it - but not yet. The City of Milford to the rescue!

Under the leadership of Mayor Tony Giannattasio, Public Works Director Chris Saley and Asst. Director Steve Johnson, DPW has set up a voluntary program, Food Scrap Collection, that should help Milford strive toward a greener future. Here's how it works:

Collect your food scraps at home (See the box at right for acceptable items.) and bring them to the Transfer Station at 775 Oronoque Road. (Use a permanent bucket or compost container that can be used again, rather than a plastic bag.) Empty them into the totes at the rear of the Transfer Station. The City has partnered with Curbside Compost, a local company, to help dispose of the collected materials.

Two major goals of the program are to combat the ever-growing issue of food waste and to usher in more sustainability in Milford. According to the press release from the city's Public Works Department, every year we throw out thousands of tons of food just here in the City of Milford. However, the Food Scrap Collection Program will make trash disposal more efficient and will reduce city operating costs – a plus for everyone. With compost collection, we can start to reuse and repurpose organic waste by taking it to local farms and companies that will turn it into compost and, in some cases, energy. By participating in the Food Scrap Collection Program, Milford residents can play a vital role in preserving our environment for future generations.

If you have questions about the Food Scrap Collection Program call Robert Harrigan, Solid Waste Supervisor, at the Public Works Department (203-783-3265). You can email Mr. Harrigan at rharrigan@milfordct.gov.

- Food Scrap Acceptable Items**
- Meat and Vegetables (no stickers)
 - Meat and Poultry (no bones)
 - Fish and Shellfish (shells okay)
 - Rice and Grains
 - Dairy Products
 - Egg shells
 - Leftovers/Spoiled food
 - Chips & Snacks
 - Bread and Pasta
 - Nuts and Seeds
 - Coffee Grounds
 - Tea Bags (no staples)

Happy New Year. Happy composting!



Spring HomeFront Day Scheduled for Saturday, May 17

Even in the early weeks of winter our Saint Raphael HomeFront team is planning for Spring HomeFront Day, scheduled for a spring Saturday, May 17. Our 27-year history with HomeFront is remarkable: Saint Raphael's is the longest serving HomeFront team within the Archdiocese of Hartford! We look forward to writing another uplifting chapter this year.

Our dedication to social justice dovetails beautifully with HomeFront, a community-based, volunteer-driven program that provides free repairs to low-income homeowners - older adults, veterans, persons with disabilities, single-parent households and parents in crisis due to illness or job loss. Our team is made up of parishioners, some with repair skills and some without, who work side-by-side making homes warmer, safer and healthier and having a lot of fun in the process. The need is great: Every year HomeFront receives hundreds of requests from families in need in our area.

We had recruited volunteers and raised funds to support a 2024 project that was canceled unexpectedly. All donations toward that effort will apply to this year's project. We are most grateful to everyone who contributed. We now have a bit of a leg up for 2025 and are building momentum toward making this year's project the best ever. If you would like to sign on to our great HomeFront team please contact Carrie Nocerino, Volunteer Coordinator, at carrietvl@yahoo.com. Let her know about your skills and whether you prefer an all-day or partial schedule on May 17. Thank you.

It is not too late to apply for help from HomeFront.

Find an application at www.homefrontprogram.org or call 800-887-4673.

All inquiries are kept confidential.



First Reconciliation at Saint Ann Church

Eighteen young parishioners met Jesus in the first time in the Sacrament of Reconciliation on Saturday, December 14 at Saint Ann Church. “Let the children come to me,” Jesus tells his disciples in Matthew’s Gospel (19:14) “for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.” Through Reconciliation, the beautiful sacrament of healing, Jesus expresses his love for children today, and the children, in turn, come to know and love Jesus. May they remain close to him throughout their lives. We congratulate and continue to pray for:

Cole Acevedo
Giuseppe Argentari
Beau Buechner
Liliana Cavanna
Michele Cervetta
Maverick Chila

Brianna Cipriano
Savannah Conway
Mary Guzas
Joecyn Hinds-Ortizk
Patrick Hurley
Julian Jorge

Riley Maziarz
Jules Munk
Grace Neeley
Drew Schulze
Sawyer Tabra
Corey Zdrojowyy

February’s Newsletter Info Due: Friday, January 10

Send news, notes, comments and photos to parishpress06460@gmail.com or call Ann Eden (203-874-8744). Thank you very much.

A Prayer for the New Year

At the start of each day, help us to recognize you above all else. Enlighten the eyes of our hearts so that we might see you and notice how you're at work through our lives. Give us the wisdom to make the best choices, and fill us with a desire to seek after you more than anything else in this world. Let your Spirit and power breathe in us, through us, fresh and new.

Thank you for being greater than anything we may face in our day. Thank you that your presence goes with us and that our joy in you is never dependent on our circumstances but is our true and lasting strength, no matter what we might face. We ask that your peace lead us and guard our hearts and minds in you. We ask for the gift of your grace in our lives this day. We love you, Lord...we need you. In Jesus' Name, Amen.”

Debbie McDaniel

**VIRTUS:
Teaching Safety -
Empowering God’s Children**
Sunday, January 26
12:00 noon - 1:30 p.m. p.m.
or
Tuesday, January 28
6:00 - 7:30 p.m.
Saint Ann Parish Center
Begin with pizza!

Saint Raphael Parish GIFT Program - Growing in Faith Together

The Archdiocese of Hartford continues to require that, every year, we offer a personal safety program for families with children and teens registered in our GIFT program (Grade 1 through Confirmation). Beginning this month we will offer VIRTUS: Teaching Safety - Empowering God’s Children, a program that replaces Child Lures or Teen Lures Preventions program from previous years.

The new program, VIRTUS: Teaching Safety - Empowering God’s Children, provides children and teens with the age-appropriate tools they need to help keep them safe. It does this by educating them in regard to boundaries, safe and unsafe behaviors and healthy relationships.

The scheduled dates for 2025 appear in the box above. The programs - for both children and teens - require the participation of an adult. We will begin with pizza in the Parish Center for the first 30 minutes of each session.

We will share additional details about these new programs with our GIFT parents/guardians. If you have questions, please contact Maria Tomasetti, atomasetti@snet.net or 203-988-8598 (voice or text).



Jubilee Year 2025 - Pilgrims of Hope

On Christmas Eve, December 24, Pope Francis opened the Holy Door to Saint Peter’s Basilica and inaugurated Jubilee Year 25. A jubilee, or holy year, is a time of pilgrimage, prayer, repentance and acts of mercy. It is, in the words of Pope Francis, “an event of great spiritual, ecclesial, and social significance in the life of the Church.”



The theme for this year, as depicted in the logo at left, is “Pilgrims of Hope.”

The four stylized figures symbolize all of humanity from the four corners of the earth. Each of them embraces another, indicating the solidarity and brotherhood that must unite people. The face of Jubilee 2025 is its official mascot, Luce. Clad in a yellow rain jacket, the hood of which partially covers her blue hair, she carries a pilgrim’s staff and wears the mud-stained boots of a “long and difficult journey.” Her shining eyes, with their scallop shell highlights, are a symbol of “the hope of the heart.” We will publish more information about Jubilee 2025 in the months ahead. Further information is available at www.usccb.org/jubilee2025.

Welcome to 2025!

2025 begins with the celebration of the Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God. At each of the two Holy Day Masses we will hear verse 2 from Psalm 67, a beautiful beginning for the new year.

*May God be gracious to us and bless us;
may he let his face shine upon us.*

2025

January will once again feature “pop your trunk” Saturday in support of the Souper Bowl of Caring, and *Coffee And* is on the calendar. Look for articles on food scrap composting and about Saint Raphael Parish’s longstanding commitment to HomeFront. Congratulations to the 18 young people who made First Reconciliation in December.

May God bless you abundantly in the new year.

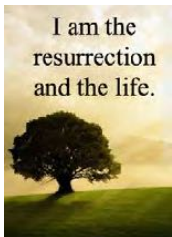
The Parish Press

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Happy 2025!



I am the
resurrection
and the life.

In Memoriam

Saint Raphael’s mourns the recent loss of . . .

Darlene Hultgren
Maryann Glynn
Leo Carroll

May they rest in peace in the fullness of God’s grace and mercy.

Bereavement Support: Sunday, January 12

The parish Bereavement Support group will meet on Sunday afternoon, January 12, at 2 o’clock in the Saint Ann’s Children’s Chapel. Please plan to be with us if you are struggling because of the death of someone you love. You may call Joanne (203-877-4020) for further information.



First Saturday Fatima Rosary

January 4, 11:00 a.m.
11:00 a.m. at Saint Ann Church

Social Gathering Team

Tuesday, January 21
6:30 p.m., Saint Ann Parish Center
Parishioners are always welcome!

We Welcome With Love . . .

. . . the newest member of our parish family:

Camila Torres Guevara

who received the life-giving waters of Baptism on Saturday, December 14 at Saint Ann Church. What a special day for you, Camila, when you became a member of Jesus’ family! May God bless you always and may you feel the warmth of his love every day of your life.



Saint Raphael Parish Website

<https://www.saintraphaelmilford.org>

Parish Policy for Daily Mass During Snowstorms

If schools in Milford are *closed* or *delayed* because of adverse weather conditions, we follow their lead.

Be aware, then, that daily Mass will not be celebrated if Milford public schools are closed or have a delayed opening.

Our greatest concern is the safety of the members of our parish family. Any Mass intention will be rescheduled.