



The Parish Press

Newsletter of Saint Raphael Parish Family

Milford, Connecticut

June 2025



May 31st - June 1st - A Very Special Weekend!

Pro-Life Diaper Drive



Our Pro-Life Ministry is sponsoring a diaper drive on this special weekend, and you can help. Please bring size 0 to 12 month diapers (only) to Saint Ann Church from 2-3 p.m. on Saturday and/or Sunday. Your generous donations will go to [Helping Hands for Hurting Hearts](#), the Pro-Life ministry at Precious Blood Parish, and to the [St. Gianna Pregnancy Resource Center](#) for distribution to mothers and families in need.

Babies, God's miracles, should be loved, protected, and kept clean, healthy and dry. Many families struggle to afford an adequate supply of diapers, and will be very grateful for your loving kindness.



Tinto Council 47 Food Drive

Phase One of the Knights of Columbus spring food drive begins this weekend, a benefit for the Saint Gabriel Food Pantry. Pick up your paper bags and lists of most needed items at any of the weekend Masses. Shop during the week and return the bag(s) when you come to Mass the weekend of June 7/8. The Knights will gladly accept your donations. Thanks very much.



Celebrate the Class of 2025

On Sunday, June 1st, at the 9:30 Mass at Saint Ann Church, we will recognize and honor members of the Saint Raphael Class of 2025: middle school, high school and college/post secondary graduates. The celebration will continue at a luncheon reception in the Parish Center Hall. Congratulations and our very best wishes to all the graduates! Look on Page 2 for a partial list of their plans for the future. More information will follow next month.



The Feast of Pentecost

The Easter season comes to a close with the Feast of Pentecost, which falls this year on Sunday, June 8th. For fifty days we have rejoiced in Christ's resurrection. With the disciples we have walked with Jesus and have heard him say, before his ascension, "Behold I am sending the promise of my Father upon you; but stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high." (Luke: 49-51)

The Father's promise was fulfilled on Pentecost when, amid "a noise like a strong driving wind" and the appearance of "tongues as of fire" all those gathered in the upper room in Jerusalem were "filled with the Holy Spirit," empowered now to "go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature." (Mark 16:15). The descent of the Holy Spirit marks the birthday of the Church.

Adult Confirmations at the Cathedral

Josel-Marco Galendez and Nancy Mary Our Lady of LaSalette Gruener, like the disciples in the upper room, were filled with the Holy Spirit on Thursday evening, May 15 when they were confirmed at Saint Joseph Cathedral by Archbishop Christopher Coyne. Congratulations!



Coffee And: The Third Weekend This Month!

With so many Sunday activities of late, we've had to move Coffee And to June's 3rd weekend, June 20/21. No change in the offerings: tasty refreshments and delightful camaraderie. Join us after weekend Masses, please, at Saint Gabriel Hall or the Saint Ann Parish Center.

Here's What's Happening with Knights of Columbus Tinto Council 47

As we went to press the Council was preparing for elections for the Fraternal year that begins in July. Informed by Charity, one of the four core principles of the Knights of Columbus, the Council has signed on as a Green Sponsor for the McGivney Vocations Golf Open on June 9th at Middlefield's Lyman Orchards Golf Club. The Vocations Fund of the Connecticut State Council supports men who are studying for the priesthood or religious life throughout the state.

Other summer events include the Council's annual Family Picnic in July, a relaxing day for family and friends at Walnut Beach with music, games for the kids and three meals served. (If the past is any indicator, a good time will be had by all!) On August 14th Tinto Council will host a presentation of the "Four Chaplains," an event for the entire parish. Look for additional information next month. We hope to see you then.

Remember, please, to check out The Domestic Church Kiosks on display in the foyers of both Saint Ann and Saint Gabriel churches. You'll find helpful and interesting booklets for you and your family on a variety of faith topics — some good summer reading. On behalf of Tinto Council 47, Grand Knight Rich Wheeling wishes you and yours a happy, safe and blessed summer.

Some Members of the Class of 2025 and their Plans

Middle School Grads, High Schools

Maeve Burns
Harborside Middle School
Will attend high school in Boston

Nathaniel (Nate) Pandiscia
West Shore Middle School
Jonathan Law High School

Logan Rivera
West Shore Middle School
Fairchild Wheeler
Multi-Magnet High School,
Bridgeport

Kendall Upchurch
West Shore Middle School
Jonathan Law High School

High School Grads, Work Plans, Colleges, Intended Majors

Bianca Armellino
Trumbull High School,
Agriscience Program
Sparsholt University, Hampshire, UK
Equine Science and Welfare

Emilio Contreras
Platt Technical High School
Full-time work in an HVAC
apprentice position
with a local company

Paige Kantor
Jonathan Law High School
Endicott College, Massachusetts
Nursing

Michael Merchant
Jonathan Law High School
Rutgers University, New Jersey
Sports Management
Will play baseball for
the Scarlet Knights

Frank Stockmal
Jonathan Law High School
University of New Haven
Graphic Design

Cameron Upchurch
Jonathan Law High School
Monmouth University, New Jersey
Business

College Graduate

Jenna Hanson
Fairfield University
December 2024
Bachelor of Science in Chemistry
Minors in Mathematics, Sociology
and Anthropology
Working on the Discovery Team
at Henkel R&D Facility
Trumbull, CT

Enjoy Newport By Land & Sea Wednesday, August 20, 2025

Travel by deluxe motor coach from CT
to historically beautiful Newport, RI.

Your trip includes a guided tour of
Newport and Ocean Drive, lunch at
Bellevue Avenue's La Forge
Restaurant and a 1-hour cruise aboard
the Coastal Queen. A guide will share
knowledge of historic sites that
surround Newport Harbor and the
Jamestown shoreline. There will be
free time at Bowen's Wharf, with its
brick walks, granite quays and 18th
century commercial wharf buildings.
Trading with all corners of the world,
Bowen's Wharf is the anchor of
Newport!

Price per person is \$189. Reservations/
full payment due by Monday, June 30.
For booking information/instructions
contact Social Gathering Committee's
travel maven Arlene Lacerenza at
alacerenza@att.net. Sounds like a
perfect summer day trip!



Donna's Creation Care Corner A Papal Focus on Caring for God's Creation

In 2015, Pope Francis issued *Laudato Si'* the first encyclical in the history of the Church to be devoted entirely to the issue of the environment. Some ten years later, on the Feast of Saint Francis of Assisi, he released a follow-up, the apostolic exhortation *Laudate Deum*. But Francis is not the only pope who has spoken up about humanity's questionable treatment of the earth, our common home.

John Paul II and his successor, Benedict XVI wrote messages for the annual Celebration of the World Day of Peace. John Paul in 1990: "The ecological crisis is a moral issue." He "reminded" Catholics of their "serious obligation to care for all of creation" and broached the subject again in 1999: "The danger of serious damage to land and sea, and to the climate, flora and fauna, calls for a profound change in modern civilization's typical consumer lifestyle." In 2001: "Unfortunately, if we scan the regions of our planet, we see that humanity has disappointed God's expectations."

Benedict expressed his concern about the environment in 2010: "The Church has a responsibility towards creation, and she considers it her duty to exercise that responsibility in public life, in order to protect earth, water and air as gifts of God the Creator meant for everyone." In his 2009 video statement to the UN Summit on Climate Change Benedict had written, "The Earth is indeed a precious gift of the Creator who, in designing its intrinsic order, has given us guidelines that assist us as stewards of his creation."

Pope Francis built upon these themes in his 2014 message: "The human family has received from the Creator a common gift: nature, which is at our disposition, and we are called to exercise a responsible stewardship over it. Yet so often we are driven by greed and arrogance."

Like his predecessors, our new pope, Leo XIV, has been outspoken about the need to confront climate change. In 2024 remarks, he declared that humans should not be "tyrannical" in their treatment of the environment and called for the church to move "from words to action."

Let us pray that Pope Leo, our governments, and our own personal actions will lead to positive change for the environment. Ever hopeful, Pope Francis had written in *Laudato Si'*, "Let us sing as we go. May our struggles and our concern for this planet never take away the joy of our hope."



Congratulations to the First Communicants!

May's two First Communion weekends were a special and beautiful time for the 26 parish young people who received Jesus in the Eucharist for the first time, and for the entire parish family who celebrated with them.

Prayerful congratulations to the First Communicants, whose names appear below. May you bring the presence of Jesus, His kindness, gentleness and love, to everyone you meet.

Cole Acevedo
Giuseppe Argentari
Beau Buechner
Liliana Cavanna
Michela Cervetta

Maverick Chila
Brianna Cipriano
Savannah Conway
Bryce Doerr
Emily Griswold

Connor Grivalsky
Liam Grivalsky
Mary Guzas
Joecyn Hinds-Ortiz
Patrick Hurley
Julian Jorge

Teagan Maguire
Riley Maziarz
Jules Munk
Grace Neeley
Sofia Noel

Drew Schulze
Sawyer Tabra
Alexis Vining
Ava Welcome
Corey Zdrojow

GIFT — Growing In Faith Together

Saint Raphael Faith Formation (Religious Education) Program Plans for 2025-2026

*Our monthly family faith formation program for people of all ages (children, teens, and adults) will begin this September. The theme for 2025/2026 is *Following Jesus Through the Church Year*. The program is open to everyone in Saint Raphael parish — singles, couples, and families with children and teens.

*First Reconciliation and First Communion preparation includes a required meeting in September for parents/guardians.

*Teen Confirmation program includes a required meeting in September for parents/guardians and teen candidates (Grade 9 or older).

*Adult Confirmation classes (for adults who have received the Sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist)

*OCIA (Order of Christian Initiation of Adults). OCIA (formerly RCIA) is the process through which adults and teens join the Catholic Church or complete their initiation into the Catholic Church. It is designed for:

*Those who are not baptized

*Those who were baptized into another Christian denomination and wish to enter into full communion with the Catholic Church

*Baptized Catholics who were never formed in the Catholic faith and have not completed their initiation—who have not received the Sacraments of Eucharist and Confirmation

If you have questions or would like additional information about any of our parish faith formation (religious education) programs, including registration, contact Maria Tomasetti, atomasetti@snet.net or 203-988-8598 (cell - voice or text).



True North VBS Registration

Earnest, the Day 4 Bible Buddy for July's VBS adventure, True North: *Trusting Jesus in a Wild World*, invites potential campers to register by Friday, July 11th for this summer's Alaskan tundra trek. Explore how easy it is to lose sight of what's true in today's wild world and track Jesus, the faithful friend we can always trust—He's our True North!

Your adventure is scheduled for:

Monday, July 21 through Friday, July 25

9:00 a.m. - 12 noon

(Extended Friday for

Compass Closing, Pizza Lunch)

Suggested donation: \$25 per child (\$5 per day)

Spend time every day having Wild Bible Adventures, visiting an Imagination Station and enjoying Sticky Scripture, Glacier Games and (of course!) Tundra Treats. Besides Earnest you'll meet Bible Buddies Ponder the Sea Otter, Claudia the King Crab, Kody the Bear (who sent you a note in the April newsletter), and the critter with the rhyming name, Bruce the Moose. Scholarships are available for this week of really cool adventures.

We need to add volunteers to our staff — adults and teens who can brave the tundra with our campers. To register or to sign on as a volunteer please reach out to Maria as at left.

Remember to mark your calendars for the 4th week of July: ***North, to Alaska!***

Dads and Grads, the Changing of the Seasons — Welcome to June!

As we celebrate Father's Day we ask God to bless all the fathers, grandfathers, foster fathers, stepfathers and godfathers of Saint Raphael Parish and all the men who provide loving support and guidance to our young people.



This month we honor the Class of 2025, middle school through college, poised for a new and exciting chapter of their lives. June 9th, the Monday after Pentecost, marks the return to the green vestments of Ordinary Time, except for the Solemnities of Trinity Sunday (6/15) and Corpus Christi (6/22) when vestments are white, and the feast of Apostles Peter and Paul (6/29), when vestments are red. Enjoy June, and raise Old Glory on Flag Day.

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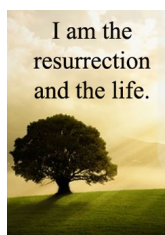
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Happy Father's Day!



I am the
resurrection
and the life.

In Memoriam

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

Genevieve Spata	Julie Neal
Joyce Glenn	Gertrude Poquette
Frances Sullivan	Joseph Benefico
Larry Kochiss	Paul Lambert
Robert D. Williams III	

May they behold the face of Christ, who is the resurrection and the life.

Bereavement Support Meets on Sunday, June 8th



The Saint Raphael Bereavement Support group will meet in the Saint Ann's Children's Chapel on Sunday afternoon June 8th at 2 o'clock

If you are struggling to cope with the death of someone you love, we invite you to be with us. Come share your thoughts and memories. Spend an hour in the comforting presence of others who have known the pain of loss. You may call Joanne (203-877-4020) for additional information.

Got News for July's Parish Press??

Send it, together with your photos, comments and suggestions, to parishpress06460@gmail.com. Or, call Ann Eden (203-874-8744) by **Friday, June 13th**. Thanks!

We Welcome With Love . . .

. . . the newest members of our parish family:

Camila Leibrand
Maximus Blasetti

Camila was baptized on Sunday, April 27th at Saint Ann Church. Maximus received the life-giving waters of Baptism on Saturday, May 17th at Saint Gabriel Church. May you walk always in the light of the Lord, little ones, and know how much you are loved.



Save the Date: Sunday July 6th

A Celebration of Dedication

In July of 2013 Deacon George Sartor brought his "joyful ministry" to Saint Ann's, which before long, linked, then ultimately merged with Saint Gabriel's to become Saint Raphael Parish. His stated hopes upon arrival: "That my time here will be fruitful and meaningful for the parish." We can safely say, "Mission accomplished, Deacon George."

On Sunday, July 6th, as he takes on a new assignment at Precious Blood Parish, we will celebrate and thank Deacon George and his lovely wife Monica for their years of dedication to the people and the parish of Saint Raphael. We hope you can be with us from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. for this very special event.