



# The Parish Press

Newsletter of Saint Raphael Parish Family

Milford, Connecticut

January 2026



## Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God

Thursday, January 1

Confessions: Saturday, December 27

Saint Gabriel Church

Holy Day Masses

9:30 a.m. 11:00 a.m.

Saint Ann Church Saint Gabriel Church  
(No Vigil Mass on New Year's Eve)

What a beautiful way to begin the new year, by honoring Mary, the Mother of God! Just days ago she had given birth to a son, wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger. The angel of the Lord appeared to shepherds and proclaimed good news of great joy: "a savior has been born," Christ the Lord.

The Christmas season will continue with the Solemnity of the Epiphany, the visit of the Magi, which we will celebrate on Sunday, January 4<sup>th</sup>. On that day, as we will hear in the collect of the Mass, "God revealed his Only Begotten son to [all] the nations by the guidance of a star."

The joyous season of the Nativity closes on the following Sunday, January 11<sup>th</sup>, with the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, the beginning of Jesus' public ministry. On the Sundays that follow, in Ordinary Time, we will learn details of Christ's baptism in the Jordan, hear Jesus call his disciples and listen as he reveals his identity and his mission in the Sermon on the Mount. Rejoice in the brief but beautiful season of Christmas.

## Carols and Charades During January's Visit to Four Corners

Parishioners of all ages - adults, teens, families with children - are welcome to be part of a Christmas visit to Four Corners, on Saturday, January 3<sup>rd</sup> at 10:30 a.m. Help brighten the day for the residents with carols, conversation and Christmas season charades. (Can you mime: Sipping hot chocolate? Making a snow angel? Building a snowman? - You're really good at this!)

If you have questions or would like to volunteer for this special holiday event please contact Maria, [atomasetti@snet.net](mailto:atomasetti@snet.net) or 203-988-8598 - voice or text. Wear your brightest smile and, perhaps, your Santa hat (festive, but not required)! The date doesn't work for you? We are planning additional parish visits to health care facilities. Watch the bulletin and the newsletter for details.

## A Word for the Christmas Fair - Fabulous!

The numbers (at left) tell a great story, but don't really capture the Fair's warm holiday spirit, made up of smiling greeters, happy vendors, and busy shoppers.



Raffle Room	\$3,505.00
Tag Sale	\$592.00
Bakery	\$1,048.00
Kitchen	\$737.80
Card & Gift	\$187.14
Vendor Fees	\$1,985.00
Total	\$8,054.94

MaryJo extends heartfelt thanks to her hard-working team and to "the parishioners who always come through" in support of the fair. A particular

highlight this year: the outstanding performance of Jonathan Law's Advanced Vocal Ensemble under their very animated director, Kelly Jones. Overall descriptor for the day? Fabulous!

## Baby Bottle Fundraising Drive

January 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>

### Help St. Gianna Pregnancy Center Save Lives

St. Gianna Pregnancy Center provides free, professional and confidential counseling to women who are facing an unwanted pregnancy, connecting with struggling moms through a program of effective online advertising. The counseling sessions encourage and support moms and can help save the lives of the unborn.

Baby bottles will be available after all the Masses on January 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>, thanks to the Knights of Columbus. The parish Pro-Life committee hopes that parishioners will take a bottle home and return it the following week with a generous donation. 100% of donations will go to St. Gianna to support their advertising efforts.

Thank you for your kindness and generosity.

## T4S Annual Souper Bowl of Caring Drive-Thru

Saturday, January 31<sup>st</sup>, 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Gear up for the annual Super Bowl of Caring, a nationwide grassroots movement of young people dedicated to fighting hunger and poverty in their local communities. T4S, Saint Raphael's energetic Teens for Service group, will host this year's drive-thru event on Saturday, January 31<sup>st</sup>, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. in the Saint Ann Parking Lot.



Here is the game plan: Drive into the parking lot, up to the Parish Center glass doors and pop your trunk or unlock your car door. The teens will gladly unload your donations - non-perishable foods, paper goods, cleaning supplies and personal hygiene products - and sort them for delivery to this year's recipient organizations: Saint Gabriel Food Pantry, Beth-El Center, and (*new this year*) Purple Pantry Boxes.

Look in the weekly bulletin or at the doors of either church for lists of each organization's most needed items and for details on how each group provides help for our community.

Can't make the drive-thru? Bring your donations to weekend Masses at either church on January 31<sup>st</sup>/February 1<sup>st</sup> or February 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup>. Thank you for your continuing and faithful support of the Souper Bowl of Caring. May the Lord bless you for making a real difference in the lives of God's least ones.

Saint Raphael Parish Website

<https://www.saintraphaelmilford.org>



**Jonathan Roumie Returns in *The Chosen***  
**Sunday, January 18 2:30-4:30 p.m.**

*The Chosen* returns to our “Parish Center Theatre Classroom” on Sunday, January 18 at 2:30 p.m. We will be screening Episodes 1 and 2 of Season 5, starring Jonathan Roumie as Jesus.

In Episode 1, *Entry*, Jesus rides into Jerusalem, the Holy City, as King, but finds that the rulers have turned His Father's house from a place of prayer into a corrupt marketplace.

Episode 2 is entitled *House of Cards*. Why kill Jesus when Rome can do it for you? As the Jewish High Priest schemes to bring Jesus down, he strikes first, turning the tables on the Jewish religious festival. Their power threatened, the country's religious leaders will go to any length to ensure this Passover meal is Jesus' last.

*The Chosen* premiered on April 21, 2019. The creators of this immensely popular television series about Jesus (now available in theaters) have achieved a unique balance between faithfulness to the Gospels and imaginative storytelling. Parishioners and friends are invited to our latest presentation. All are welcome to *Come and See*.

**Donna's Creation Care Corner**  
**Look at the Birds of the Air ...**



... and be aware that from November through April, as part of God's plan, some birds - like the noble cardinal at right - do not migrate to warmer regions that abound with insects, berries, and seeds. Instead, they overwinter in Connecticut where, because of food scarcity and extreme cold, they need a great deal of fat and energy reserves in their diet. Enter bird feeders, and the many kind folks who fill and maintain them, and who are constantly delighted at the variety and activity of their feathered visitors. Maintaining bird feeders is important for the health of the birds. Ideas to consider:

\*Consistency is key. Birds actually become reliant on a food source; once you start feeding them, you should continue.

\*Keep bird feeders clean. In nature, seed heads, berries, fruits, and insects are spread about to prevent contamination, while seeds packed tightly in feeders can become tainted.

\*Tips for cleaning: Every 2-4 weeks, empty feeders, scrub them with warm soapy water, and soak them for about 10 minutes in a solution of 1-part bleach to 9-parts water. Allow feeders to dry completely, preferably outside in direct sunlight. Fresh air and sunshine are nature's best disinfectants.

\*Have two feeders if possible. While one is being cleaned and dried the other can be the feeding station.

\*Choose food that packs a nutritional punch. Black-oil sunflower seeds are filled with essential fats and protein and are easy for small birds to handle and crack. Sunflower seeds attract the greatest number of species, but safflower seeds and millet also attract diverse birds. Read the labels for pre-made mixes carefully and avoid any that contain excessive fillers, which create waste, attract pests and offer few nutrients.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus observes that birds “neither sow nor reap, nor gather into barns, yet your heavenly Father feeds them.” We are part of God's plan when we feed His amazing winged and feathered creatures and allow them to thrive during these cold, dark months. God has left them in our hands.



**Change to the Coffee And Schedule for 2026**

Beginning this month, we will gather for Coffee And, that popular after-Mass weekend get together, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> weekend of the month. Here are the dates:

January 17/18	May 16/17	September 19/20
February 21/22	June 20/21	October 17/18
March 21/22	July 18/19	November 21/22
April 18/19	August 15/16	December 19/20

**Social Gathering Meetings Changed to  
Wide-Awake Wednesdays at 10 a.m.**

January 21	May 20	September 16
February 18	June 17	October 21
March 18	July 15	November 18
April 15	August 19	December no mtg.

**Pray the Rosary  
Opportunities at Saint Raphael Parish**



**7:30 a.m. (before 8:00 a.m. daily Mass)**  
Monday and Friday at Saint Ann Church  
Tuesday and Thursday at Saint Gabriel Church

**Tuesday, 12:00 Noon**  
Saint Ann Church, Children's Chapel  
(Use Church Street side entrance)

**First Saturday Fatima Rosary at Saint Ann Church**  
11:00 a.m. October - February  
Upcoming on January 3<sup>rd</sup>

**Knights of Columbus Rosary Recitation**  
Last Thursday of the Month  
7:00 p.m. at Saint Ann Parish Center  
Upcoming on January 29<sup>th</sup>



### Adult and Teen Confirmations at the Cathedral of Saint Joseph

The Most Reverend Christopher J. Coyne, Archbishop of Hartford, conferred the Sacrament of Confirmation on seven parish candidates the evening of Tuesday, November 18<sup>th</sup> and on one parish teen the afternoon of Saturday, December 6<sup>th</sup>. Congratulations to the newly confirmed, sealed now with the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Confirmed on November 18<sup>th</sup>:

*Alyssa Catherine of Siena Rodriguez  
Amaya Frances Xavier Cabrini Rodriguez  
Patrick Peter Rogers  
John Michael Ryan  
Vincent Gabriel Ryan  
Lucia Torres  
John Matthew Vargas*

Confirmed on December 6<sup>th</sup>:

*Anne Janelle Alberta Dimaya*

Let us pray: *Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love.*



### Jesus Loves Me and Makes Me New

#### First Reconciliation at Saint Gabriel Church

Nineteen young parishioners met Jesus for the first time when they received the Sacrament of Reconciliation on Saturday, December 13<sup>th</sup>, at Saint Gabriel Church. Through this beautiful Sacrament of Healing they came to know the mercy of our awesome God. May they remember always how much God loves them and how Jesus calls them to follow him. Congratulations to:

<i>Analía María de la Cruz Jiménez Lucy Laird</i>
<i>Scarlett Bernardo Austin Jackson</i>
<i>Thomas Bevilacqua Fred Kirkham</i>
<i>Victoria Boltruczuk Autumn LaRosa</i>
<i>Summer Bottiglieri Charlotte Marchand</i>
<i>Lucas Charochak Maximiliano Meja-Estrada</i>
<i>Mason Conelli Adriana Miquelan Rocha</i>
<i>Myla Feliciano Jaisa Mondejar</i>
<i>Siena Gargiulo Molly Murphy</i>
<i>Riley Holmberg Evelyn Twidwell</i>

### First Holy Communion

Robert (Robby) Kornberg made his First Holy Communion at Saint Ann Church on Sunday, November 30<sup>th</sup>. God bless you always, Robby.



### GIFT Sacramental Confirmation

**Church Year:**  
**Seasons and Feasts**  
Sunday, January 11<sup>th</sup>  
12:30-2:00 p.m.  
**or**  
Tuesday, January 13<sup>th</sup>  
6:30-8:00 p.m.  
Candidates only  
Parish Center Classroom

### Growing in Faith Together (GIFT) Program

#### VIRTUS: Teaching Safety - Empowering God's Children

Every year, as required by the Archdiocese of Hartford, the parish schedules a personal safety program for families with children and teens registered in our GIFT program (Grade 1 through Confirmation). In January 2026, we will be offering the VIRTUS: Teaching Safety - Empowering God's Children program, which replaces the Child Lures or Teen Lures Prevention program used previously.

By educating them regarding boundaries, safe and unsafe behaviors and healthy relationships, the program provides children and teens with the age-appropriate tools they need to help keep them safe.

### Virtus: Teaching Safety - Empowering God's Children

Sunday, January 25<sup>th</sup>  
12 noon-1:30 p.m.  
**or**  
Tuesday, January 27<sup>th</sup>  
6:00-7:30 p.m.  
  
Saint Ann Parish Center  
Begin with pizza!

The program dates for January appear in the box at right. These programs, designed for both children and teens, require the participation of a parent/guardian. We will begin with pizza in the Parish Center for the first 30 minutes of each session. We will share additional details about these programs with our GIFT program parents/guardians. If you have questions, please contact Maria Tomasetti (203-988-8598 or [atomasetti@snet.net](mailto:atomasetti@snet.net)).

### January Notes from the Grand Knight, Richard Wheeling



First report for the new year, the incredible success of our November food drive! Once again our parishioners exceeded expectations. Volunteers collected and sorted more than 4800 lbs. of food (370+ bags of non perishables)! Working like a well-oiled machine, they had finished most of the sorting before the last bags of donations were delivered to Saint Gabriel Hall. Speaking for Saint Raphael Parish and Tinto Council #47 it is my privilege to thank you sincerely for your continued generosity to community members in need. May the light of hope continue to shine brightly for all of us.

Tinto Council members were a welcome presence at December's Christmas Fair, offering information and literature about the Knights of Columbus, the benefits of membership and the charitable works of both the order and our council. Brother Knights spoke to many men at the fair about membership. One young man joined before the weekend was over. Another plans to visit one of our meetings before joining. Once again I encourage any man from the parish to consider becoming part of this great organization. Interested? Contact Richard Wheeling (203-520-3250) or John Marmolejo (203-895-7696).

On behalf of Tinto Council #47 I wish you and your families a very Happy New Year.

**Welcome to 2026  
and a Very Busy Parish January!**

**2026** The year and the month start beautifully as we *rejoice to proclaim the Blessed ever virgin Mary Mother of God's Son and Mother of the Church*, words from the liturgy of the holy day.

Highlighted calendar events: the baby bottle drive in support of St. Gianna Pregnancy Center; a visit to Four Corners (charades, anyone?); a screening of Season 5 episodes of *The Chosen* and notes on the care and importance of bird feeders.

Congratulations to the newly confirmed, to the 19 young parishioners who made First Reconciliation and to a First Communicant.

May the Lord bless and keep you throughout the new year. May he be gracious to you, look upon you kindly and give you peace. Happy New Year!

***The Parish Press***

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Milford, Connecticut

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***Pray for peace in the new year.***

**We Welcome With Love ...**

Mae Tatro

who was baptized on Sunday, November 30<sup>th</sup> at Saint Ann Church. God bless you, Mae, and keep you always close to his heart.



**In Memoriam**

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

Jane Joseph      Alfred Kulenski  
Madeline Lowery      Michael Macone

May they be welcomed into the peace and happiness of everlasting life.



**Bereavement Support Sunday, January 11<sup>th</sup>**

Our parish Bereavement Support group will meet on Sunday afternoon, January 11<sup>th</sup>, at 2 o'clock in the Saint Ann Children's Chapel.

Please join us if you are grieving the loss of someone you love. Let us stand with you and beside you during this most difficult time. You may find comfort in this prayerful, confidential setting among others who have known the pain of loss. Call Joanne (203-877-4020) for additional information.

**Info for February Newsletter Due January 12<sup>th</sup>**

What's new for you in the new year? Something you'd like to share with the parish family? Submit your news, notes comments and photos for the February edition of the newsletter to [parishpress06460@gmail.com](mailto:parishpress06460@gmail.com) or call Ann Eden (203-874-8744) by Monday, January 12<sup>th</sup>. Thanks very much.

***Prayer for God's Blessing in the New Year***

*Remember us, O God;  
from age to age be our comforter.  
You have given us the wonder of time,  
blessings in days and nights, seasons and years.  
Bless your children at the turning of the year  
and fill the months ahead with the bright hope  
that is ours in the coming of Christ.  
You are our God, living and reigning,  
forever and ever. Amen.*