



The Parish Press

Newsletter of Saint Raphael Parish Family
Milford, Connecticut

March 2026



Our Lenten Journey Continues With Opportunities to be Drawn to the Cross



Stations of the Cross Friday afternoons at 3:00 p.m. Saint Ann Church

Walk with Jesus, drawn to the Cross,
as he makes his painful way to Golgotha.

March 6th
*Stations of the Cross
for Today's Disciples*
March 13th
Cross Examinations
March 20th
*Come to Me All of You
Stations in the Voice of Christ*
March 27th
Mary's Way of the Cross

Teen-led Stations Friday evenings at 7:00 p.m.

March 20th
Saint Gabriel Church

March 27th
Saint Ann Church

Parish Lenten Supper Friday, March 13th, 6:00 p.m., Parish Center

Draw near to the Cross as we share a Lenten meal with our parish
family, our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Bill of fare, catered by Lasse's:

Baked Cod Fish Dinner
Mac & Cheese
Roasted Vegetables
Tartar Sauce, Lemons, Dinner Rolls
Coffee, tea and dessert will be provided.

\$15/ adults. \$5/ children 12 and under

Make your reservations (payment included) after Masses
on February 28/March 1 and March 7/8.

As part of this Lenten gathering, Pat Pavlucik will offer
reflections on Lenten prayer, sacrifice and charity. A charter
member of our GIFT team, a lover of Shakespeare and a
graduate of the Catholic Biblical School, Pat facilitates both
our Thursday morning Bible study and our program of
Baptismal preparation.

Call Kathleen Buchanan (203-606-6476) for further
information. Hope to see you there!

Lenten Confessions* Mondays 6:00 - 6:30 p.m.

March 2nd.and 16th
Saint Gabriel Church
March 9th and 23rd
Saint Ann Church

Holy Week

Monday, March 30th
10:00 - 10:30 a.m.
Saint Gabriel Church
Tuesday, March 31st
4:00 - 4:30 p.m.
Wednesday, April 1st
7:00 - 7:30 p.m.
Saint Ann Church
*in addition to regular
Saturday confessions.



Coffee And March 21/22

The calendar will say it's spring when we get
together for this month's Coffee And. (Let's see
if the weatherman agrees!)

Stop in to the Parish Center or Saint Gabriel
Hall after any weekend Mass. While you sip and
snack enjoy the company of our terrific parish
family and catch up on what's going on at that
happening place, Saint Raphael Parish.



Connecticut March for Life Wednesday, March 18th Connecticut Capitol Building 210 Capitol Avenue, Hartford

10:30 a.m. Pre-Rally Concert
11:30 a.m. Rally
12:30 p.m. March

Complete details, including registration, at
<https://marchforlife.org/Connecticut/>

Life is a Gift

An Hour of Lenten Prayer Monday, March 9th, 7:00 p.m. Saint Ann Church

Please plan to be with us at Saint Ann Church for an hour of Lenten Prayer on
Monday, March 9th, at 7:00 p.m.

Come for Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, to worship and adore the real
presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Hear inspiring insights about our Lord
Jesus from the writings of Henry Nouwen, one of the most beloved spiritual
thinkers of the 20th century. Offer prayers and reflect on what you have heard.
The hour closes with Benediction. Here is another opportunity to ponder
Christ's boundless love during this holy season.

Saturday, March 21st Is Marriage Retreat Day Married Couples are Warmly Invited

The Archdiocesan Office of Faith Formation and Parish Life invites married
couples to *God Chose You for Me*, a day retreat, presented by Worldwide
Marriage Encounter. Its focus is on deepening the spirituality of Matrimony
and strengthening couples' spiritual connection through personal prayer.

The retreat will be held at the Pastoral Center, 467 Bloomfield Ave.,
Bloomfield, CT. \$60 per couple registration fee includes coffee, lunch and
materials. Details at <https://archdioceseofhartford.org/event/marriage-retreat-day/>
or contact Valerie (860-541-649, X2678 or valerie.StJean@aohct.org)
Deacon George and Monica are planning to attend and hope to see you there.

**Four Season 5 Episodes
of *The Chosen* this Month
2:30-4:30 p.m.
Parish Center Classroom**

**Sunday, March 1st
Episode 5 - *Because of Me***

Pharisees' fiery debate: how to find and arrest Jesus.

Episode 6 - *Reunions*

Judas holds a secret audience with Caiaphas.



**Sunday, March 15th
Episodes 7 and 8 - *The Last Supper***

Part 1: Judas' betrayal and the apostles' reaction
Part 2: Jesus prays in the Garden of Gethsemane

This Just In from ChosenCon!

Marie, Rose and Sue Cox filed this succinct report from Charlotte, NC: February's ChosenCon was amazing! Meet & Greet with Jonathan Roumie!

Saint Raphael Parish Website

<https://www.saintraphaelmilford.org>

**Donna's *Creation Care Corner*
Water for the Birds - In Every Season**

Season in, season out, birds need water, which can be scarce in winters like this one, when the usual sources can freeze. Eating snow is not a good option; the energy birds need to melt the snow takes away from the energy they need to stay warm. In warmer seasons, even when water is available birds expend vital energy as they go from food to water sources.

Our feathered friends also need water for bathing, no matter the season. In the winter, clean feathers trap air more efficiently, providing extra insulation crucial to a bird's surviving freezing nights. Clean feathers in the summer insulate against heat and protect against UV rays. Bathing also cools a bird's body and removes the parasites that prevail in warmer weather.

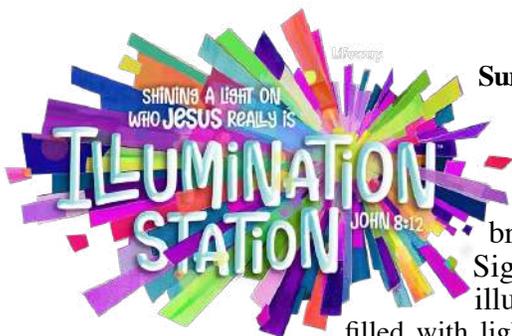
A bird bath, then may be more important than a bird feeder in supporting overall bird health. Bonus - birdbaths attract seed-eating birds and all other bird species, too. Here are some tips for choosing a bird-preferred birdbath.

Durable, weather-resistant plastic is a good choice. (Ice can cause cracks and leaks in concrete baths, while the sun heats metal baths too rapidly.) Choose one with a shallow basin, 1.5 - 2" deep. with a gradual slope from edge to center. Birds' feet must rest securely on the bottom, allowing them to splash, flutter their wings or immerse themselves in order to clean their feathers.

Adding slightly rough rocks (not polished) provides extra surfaces for perching and preening, allows birds to gauge the water's depth and gives smaller birds a safe place to wade without getting in over their heads. It's important to change the water every day or 2 and to clean the birdbath every week or so. Use a solution of 1 part white vinegar to 9 parts water (no soap!) to prevent the spread of disease.



Nothing is quite so rewarding as watching birds, Saint Francis of Assisi's "sisters and brothers," frolic in a birdbath you've provided for them. More spiritually rewarding, however, is knowing that you've followed Saint Matthew's urging to offer a cup of water to the thirsty.



**Summer VBS Camp *Illumination Station* Coming July 20-24
Shining a Light on Who Jesus Really Is
Registration Open Now for Children ages 4-11**

We invite this year's VBS campers to spend the brightest week of the year at the Illumination Station! Sign on and explore all the ways light brightens, illuminates, reflects, and reveals. In a glowing world filled with light they will discover how Jesus shines as they come to understand his true nature as the Light of the World. He is the perfect, powerful, and proven Son of God as well as God's plan for forgiveness. The campers will walk away knowing Jesus is the Light they can follow forever and how they can shine Jesus' light and love on other people.

You will find the Illumination Station at the Saint Raphael Parish Center and Grounds, 501 Naugatuck Avenue. It will be open Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. until 12 noon (extended day on Friday for the closing celebration and pizza lunch). Suggested donation is \$25 per child (\$5 per day). Camp scholarships are available. Contact Maria Tomasetti, 203-988-8598 (cell) or atomasetti@snet.net for a registration form or with questions. Adult and teen (ages 12+) volunteers needed. Watch the bulletin for meeting and training dates. Thanks very much.

Tiny Tag Sale Notes

Committee Meeting
Thursday, March 12th
6:30 p.m.

(1st meeting)
School classroom
Decide drop-off dates.

We'll be needing
volunteers for:
sorting, organizing,
selling and cleanup.

Join the team!

Tag Sale Date:
Saturday, May 23rd
9:00 a.m - 3:00 p.m.

**GIFT Sacramental Classes
First Communion Program**

Session #2

Liturgy of the Eucharist

Saturday, March 7th

10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon

For children with parent/guardian
Parish Center Classroom
(Weekday evening make-up session
will also be scheduled.)

Church and Sacristy Tours

Saturday, March 21st

1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Saint Gabriel Church

or

Saturday, March 28th

1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Saint Ann Church

**Confirmation Program
Living the Moral Life and
*Catholic Social Teaching***

Sunday, March 8th

12:30 - 2:00 p.m.

or

Tuesday, March 10th

6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Confirmation candidates only.

**Growing in Faith Together (GIFT) Program
Following Jesus Through the Church Year**

New Life in Christ

(Easter Vigil, Easter Sunday, Easter Season)

What does Jesus' Resurrection, his rising from the dead, mean for our lives as his disciples, his followers? Our belief in the Resurrection of Jesus is at the center, the cornerstone, of what we believe as Catholics. All of our beliefs flow from that central, reality. As the angel told the women who came to Jesus' tomb on Easter morning, "He is risen. He is not here."

During our March GIFT sessions we will learn more about the meaning and importance of Jesus' Resurrection. We will discover how we, his 21st century disciples, can live the experience of the risen Christ through prayer, participation in the Eucharist and other sacraments, service to those in need, and the example of a Catholic life. We will also deepen our understanding of the Easter Vigil and the Easter Season.

As you know, children and teens participate in our monthly GIFT program sessions with at least one parent/guardian. After the first hour, we break into age-appropriate groups (family session with children through grade 4 with parents/guardians; children in grades 5 & 6; preteens/teens; and adults.

Please contact Maria Tomasetti, atomasetti@snet.net or 203-988-8598 (voice or text) if you have questions.

March Preparation Program for Adult Confirmation

Catholics age 18 or older who have not received the Sacrament of Confirmation are invited to participate in a series of 6 or 7 evening classes that will prepare them to be confirmed at the Cathedral of Saint Joseph in Hartford on Tuesday evening, May 12th. Sessions will begin this month. In the Sacrament of Confirmation the baptized person is sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit and strengthened for loving service to the Body of Christ. Watch the bulletin for further information or reach out to Maria as above.



February GIFT
Sunday, March 22nd
12:00 noon. - 2:15 p.m.

or

Tuesday, March 24th
6:00 - 8:15 p.m.

*Sessions begin with
pizza for dinner!*



News from the Knights, Courtesy of Richard Wheeling

Hope this finds all the Saint Raphael parishioners doing well, thawing out and warming up after the multi-snowstorm start to 2026!

Final numbers are in for January's very successful Baby Bottle drive on behalf of St. Gianna's Pregnancy Center. It was even more successful than we thought! Some last minute contributions raised the donation total from \$4,100.00 to a very generous \$4,600.00. We cannot thank you enough for supporting the women of our community.

Next, a reminder about the kiosks located in the vestibules of both churches. They are stocked with a variety of small spiritual booklets meant to help Catholics live out the Church's vision for our families. Please feel free to "take a look and take a book." Share it with a friend or family member or, after you've read it, return it to the kiosk for the benefit of another family.

Finally, I would like to mention two upcoming events. In May the Knights will host an open house featuring "McGivney Beer and Cigars." (Who knew that Blessed Michael had an interest in a brewery?!) The tentative date is Saturday May 30th. Men of the parish please join us for some "down time". More details to follow. Watch the bulletin and the newsletter. In June we will be sponsoring another food drive in support of the parish food pantry as we continue to assist those in our community.

On behalf of The Knights of Columbus, Tinto Council 47, I wish you a joyous Lenten Season and a Blessed Easter.

**Pork Roast Dinner on March
22nd Supports HomeFront**



The annual and always tasty Pork Roast Dinner in support of HomeFront is on the calendar for Sunday, afternoon, March 22nd at 3:30 at Saint Gabriel Hall. You won't want to miss it.

Tickets for this "Treat Your Tastebuds" event will be available after weekend Masses this month. Look for the reservation specialists at the doors of both churches.

The dinner supports a really great cause, HomeFront's one-day repair blitz for a local family in need, scheduled for Saturday, May 2nd.

As always, we will need volunteers, both skilled and DIY workers to assist with the repairs. If you can help - and we pray that you can - please reach out to HomeFront captain John Marmolejo (203-375-2912 or jmarmolejo@snet.net.) Thank you and God bless.

Lots of Lenten Activities in March, A Marriage Retreat, Birdbath Notes and More



Please circle the March dates for the Hour of Lenten Prayer, the Parish Lenten Supper and Stations of the Cross, opportunities to draw closer to our Lord and to one another in love.

In a timely bit of planning, this month's episodes of *The Chosen* mirror our calendar as we move into Holy Week.

Read about *God Chose You for Me*, the aptly named Archdiocesan retreat for married couples and about the Pork Roast dinner in support of HomeFront.

Purple is, of course, the color for Lent, but there may be some wearin' o' the green on March 17th, the day when almost everyone claims to be Irish. Happy Saint Patrick's Day!

The Parish Press
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In Memoriam

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

Kaj Gartz Andrew Biagioni
 John Meuser Margaret Healey
 Sr. Katherine Baker, CSJ

May God grant them eternal joy in heaven.



Bereavement Support Meets on Sunday, March 8th



The parish Bereavement Support group will meet in the Saint Ann Children's Chapel on Sunday afternoon, March 8th, at 2 o'clock.

If you are finding it difficult to cope with the death of someone you love, please consider meeting with us. You may find comfort in sharing your story and your memories with others who have known the pain and the loneliness of loss. For additional information please call Joanne (203-877-4020).

Information for April's Newsletter Due March 10th

Submit your news, notes comments, photos and suggestions for the newsletter's April edition to our editorial office by Tuesday, March 10th. Send them to parishpress06460@gmail.com or call Ann Eden (203-874-8744). Thanks very much. We look forward to hearing from you.

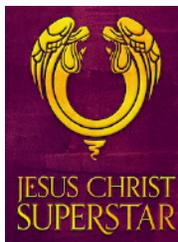
Love and Best Wishes

as you begin your married life together . . .



James and Daisy (Green) Coleman
 .who were married on Valentine's Day, Saturday, February 14th at Saint Gabriel Church. Congratulations, James and Daisy! May the Lord in his goodness bless you with good health, happiness and a deep and abiding love.

**Save the Date for *Jesus Christ Superstar!*
 Parish Life Excursion Wednesday, May 6th**



Jesus Christ Superstar, a cultural phenomenon that shook the world with its electrifying rock score, is the next DK Tours presentation booked by the Parish Life committee. Reserve early - tickets sell fast!

Departs Wednesday, May 6th.
 \$224 per person

Roundtrip motorcoach transportation
 Full course lunch at the Gelston House Restaurant
 Orchestra seats to the 2:00 p.m. performance
 Details at <https://dktoursllc.com/goodspeed>