

ST. RAPHAEL CATHOLIC CHURCH



1513 Dunster Road ♦ Rockville, Maryland 20854

December 15, 2019

Parish Office Hours Monday-Friday: 9:00 AM–5:00 PM

Parish Phone 301-762-2143
Parish Fax 301-762-0719
Website www.straphaels.org

Rev. Michael Salah, Pastor, ext. 112
Rev. Dan Gallagher, Parochial Vicar, ext. 150
Rev. Thomas Morrow, Retired, ext. 128

Deacon Jose Carbonell, ext. 187
Deacon Jorge Gatica, ext. 164
Deacon Richard Mattocks, 301-928-8227
Deacon Frank Salatto, ext. 149
Mary J. Beaudoin, Dir. Of Religious Education, ext. 124
Gerri Stoner, St. Raphael School Secretary, ext. 122
Teri Dwyer, Principal, Baptism Coordinator, ext. 121
Eileen Kutchak, Dir. of Parish Programming, ext. 110
Luisa Duarte, Spanish Coordinator, 240-864-2565
Pietro Lojacono, Assistant for Religious Education, ext. 123
Annalee McHugh, Youth Minister, 240-864-2519
Vince Natali, Dir. Of Music Ministries, 240-864-2532
Suzanne Nelson, Adult Faith Formation, 443-472-3730
Linda Poindexter, RCIA Coordinator, 240-864-2542
Elaine Salatto, Publications, Welcoming, 240-864-2513
Sandy Shamburek, Social Concerns Coordinator, 240-864-2514

New Parishioners: A warm welcome to St. Raphael's Catholic Church. Blue registration cards are available on the wall rack in the main entrance of the church. The Parish Wide Ministry Resource List can be found on our website by clicking Ministries, Social Responsibility, and Documents.

For Life Affirming Resources:

<http://www.adw.org/pregnant-need-help/>
Healing after abortion? Project Rachel 301-853-4565

Weekend Masses:

Saturday: 5:00 PM
Sunday: 7:00, 8:30, 10:00, 11:30AM,
1:00PM (español), 6:00PM (youth)
Monday thru Friday: 6:30 and 9:00AM
Saturday: 9:00 AM

Weekday Masses:

Penance:

Tuesday: 7:00 - 7:30 PM and
Saturday: 3:45 - 4:30 PM

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament:

Tuesday: 6:45 PM
Thursday: 9:30 AM

Benediction:

Tuesday, following novena 7:45 PM
Thursday, 7:15PM

Miraculous Medal Novena:

Tuesday, 7:30PM

Divine Mercy Chaplet:

Tuesday, following Novena
Thursday, 7:00PM

Sacrament of Baptism: Parish Registration and a Baptism class is required. Please contact Teri Dwyer to register and plan to attend the class while awaiting the birth or adoption of your child.

Sacrament of Matrimony: In accord with the regulations of the Archdiocese of Washington, couples must contact a priest and begin preparation at least six months prior to the wedding. Parish registration and active participation for the minimum of three months is required before preparation may begin. Living together before marriage is sinful and harmful to the future marriage. Couples who are living together will be asked to live separately during the preparation time.

What does it mean to be an active Catholic? Frequently, those seeking to celebrate Marriage, have children baptized, or serve as sponsors for Confirmation or Baptism request a letter stating they are parishioners and active, practicing Catholics. To receive such a letter, one must be registered in the parish, attend Mass regularly, and be committed to a stewardship of time, talent, and treasure. We encourage all parishioners to become active in one of the parish organizations. In a community as large as St. Raphael, one means of verifying participation is through the regular use of parish offertory envelopes. If you choose not to participate in the support of the parish, or are unable to contribute at this time, please at least note your prayerful support on your envelope and place it in the weekly offertory. We will then be aware of your continued participation, and you will not be noted as "inactive" on our parish roster.

Dear Parishioners,

I once again present this "Tithing" piece to you. It has a holy perspective to help each of us live our life more closely to God.

I always thank God for your generosity. Please continue to give systematically, give cheerfully, give faithfully, and give thoughtfully by wrapping your gift in a parish envelope or selecting to donate through faith direct.

We are the church, together we can help the poor, maintain our buildings, pay our utilities, pay our staff and continue our Catholic education. We give because we are blessed by God, "**we do not give to a need, but rather we need to give**" in recognition and appreciation that everything we have comes from the Lord. So we give to God in gratitude, and with a cheerful attitude.

Tithing is not a new idea, it is based on the spiritual principles of the Old Testament and the teachings of Christ. Tithing is, making a voluntary, and systematic contribution of financial support to God's church.

Voluntary: means we are giving out of Love for God and thanking God for the many blessings he has given us. The Old Testament tells us that we are to give 10% of our property to God's Church. And God in turn will enrich our lives.

The bible mentions the word tithe 46 times in Genesis. Fourteen times Abraham gives the priest Melchizedek a tenth of everything he had. Jacob the grandson of Abraham, utters this vow in **Genesis 28:20-22**, "If God remains with me to protect me on this journey I am making, and to give me enough bread to eat and clothing to wear, and I come back safe to my father's house, the Lord shall be my God.... Of everything you give me I will faithfully return a tenth back to you"

Sirach 35:7-10 "In generous spirit pay homage to the Lord be not sparing of freewill gifts. With each contribution show a cheerful countenance, and pay your tithes in a spirit of joy. Give to the Most High as he has given to you, generously, according to your means. For the Lord is the one who always repays, and he will give back to you sevenfold."

Exodus 23:19 The choicest first fruits of your soil you shall bring to the house of the Lord, your God.

Leviticus 27:26-33 The first born of an animal already belongs to the Lord, one tenth of all the produce of the land belongs to the Lord. When the animals are counted every tenth one belongs to the Lord.

Proverbs 3:9-10 Honor the Lord with all your wealth with the first fruits of all your produce, then will your barns be filled with grain with new wine your vats will overflow.

Tithing will change our lives and the life of the church.

I can tell you first hand, I was born selfish and stingy. Somehow God opened my eyes and I began to question, why is it that I can simply open the refrigerator and eat when I am hungry, while other kids are going to bed hungry, digging through the trash for food. Why is it that I have a warm bed to sleep in while the homeless have to sleep under the bridges. Finally I understood the Words of Christ, You will always have the poor with you. They taught me to be generous. I finally learned to appreciate God's blessings, and the need to give my first 10% back to God. When I was hungry you gave me something to eat.

God Bless you,
Fr. Mike

Mass Schedule and Intentions for the Week

Monday	December 16
6:30 AM	Augsto Arabelli (d)
9:00 AM	Julie Wessel (d)
Tuesday	December 17
6:30 AM	Arthur Nicolini (d)
9:00 AM	Marjorie A. Cammarota (d)
Wednesday	December 18
6:30 AM	Howard Jernigan (d)
9:00 AM	Genevieve Edelman (d)
Thursday	December 19
6:30 AM	Donald O'Rourke (d)
9:00 AM	Donald Fridell (d)
Friday	December 20
6:30 AM	Howard Jernigan (d)
9:00 AM	Catherine McGinis (d)
Saturday	December 21
9:00 AM	Virginia Wolf (d)
5:00 PM	Fr. Gallagher Edward Janus (d)
Sunday	December 22
7:00 AM	Fr. Morrow Bryce Dickgeiser (d)
8:30 AM	Fr. Salah Members of the Parish
10:00 AM	Fr. Salah Novak Family (d)
11:30 AM	Fr. Gallagher Michele Lowery (d)
1:00 PM	Fr. Gallagher
6:00 PM	Fr. Morrow Catherine Dirlam (d)

The Priest Mass Schedule is subject to change.

Schedule for Confession:

Tuesday, December 17, 7:00PM, Parish Penance Service

Saturday, December 21, 3:45-4:30PM

RCIA/RICA (Spanish RCIA): Non-Catholics or Catholics who have not received Eucharist and Confirmation, come and discover more about the Catholic Faith! Contact Linda Poindexter, 240-864-2542, lpoindexter@straphaels.org and for Spanish: Luis & Maruja Quezada, 301-330-5982, for details. Any youth interested in becoming Catholic contact the Office of Religious Education, 301-762-2143, ext. 124.

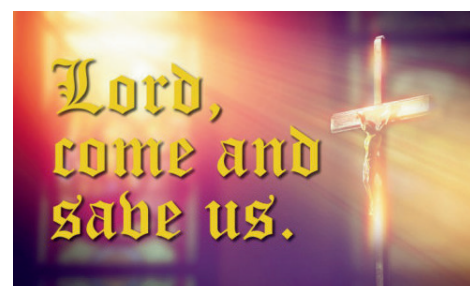
Education:

St. Raphael School: 301-762-2143—Mrs. Teri Dwyer, Principal

Baptisms:

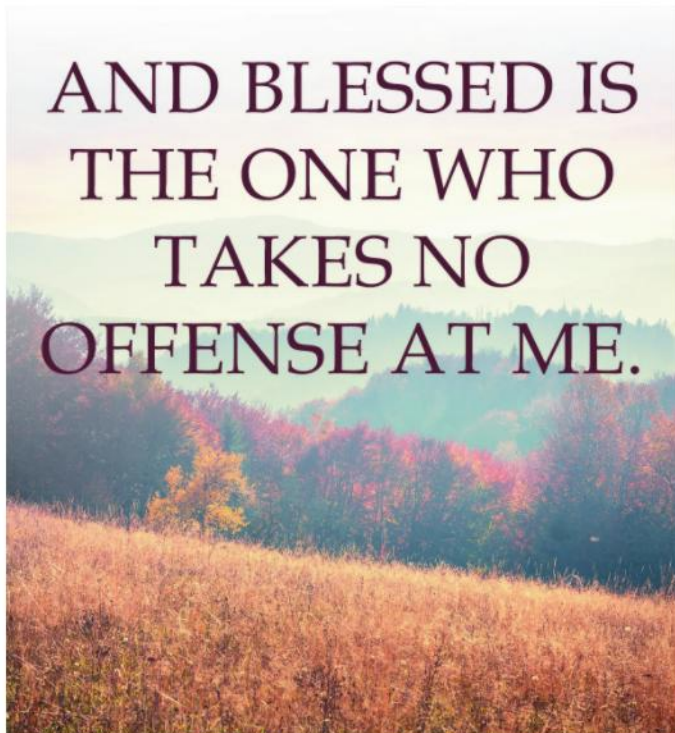
Mia Kalista Nuredini

December 7



THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Monday December 16	Tuesday December 17	Wednesday December 18	Thursday December 19	Friday December 20	Saturday December 21	Sunday December 22
Religious Education, 4:30 & 7PM, Classrooms, Church	Religious Education, 4:30PM, Classrooms	Contemplative Prayer, 9:45AM, Upper Room D	Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament after 9AM Mass	Spanish Ministry, 5:15PM, Duffy Center 3456	No Men's Group	Parish Library is Open, 8AM-1PM
CYO Basketball, Trumpet Room	Spanish Ministry Posadas, 6PM, Parish Library	Children's Liturgy, Rehearsal, 5PM, Church, Duffy Center 3456	Spanish Ministry Posadas, 6PM, Parish Library	Spanish Ministry, Posadas, 6PM, Parish Library	Spanish Bible, 10AM, Upper Room D	RCIA, 9:30 AM Youth Center
Spanish Ministry Posadas, 6PM, Parish Library	Parish Penance Service, 7PM, Church	Spanish Ministry Posadas, 6PM, Parish Library	Legion of Mary Spanish, 7PM, Upper Room ABC	Spanish Prayer, 7PM, Duffy Center 3456, Youth Center	No Spanish RCIA	Children's Liturgy, 10AM, 1PM, Duffy Center
Respect for Life, 7PM, Room 10	Spanish Prayer, 7PM, Upper Room ABC	Legion of Mary, English, 7PM, Room 10	Boy Scouts, 7:30PM, APR	Young adult Diving Mercy Spanish, 7PM, Room 12	Spanish Ministry, Posadas, 6PM, Church	No Religious Education No Spanish Scripture
		Young Adult Divine Mercy Spanish, 7PM, Upper Room ABC		Light of Christ Prayer, 7:30PM, Parish Library		Spanish Choir, 11:30AM, Upper Room ABC
		Nueva Alianza, 7PM, Upper Room D				Spanish Ministry, Posadas, 2:30PM, Duffy Center 3456
		Bible study, 7:30PM, Duffy Center 3,5				No Youth Ministry



December 8, 2019

Offertory \$35,963.00

Poor Box: \$201.00

Retirement for Religious \$3,632.00



Please pray for Meredydd Evans, Catherine Loveland, Mary Ellen Mahoney, Jack Reed, nephew of Lillie Basso, Yasmine Tashman, William Valentine

Please pray for soul of Richard Cornish and Georgette Hoponick.

If you are on the mend and wish your name to be removed from our prayer list, please call the parish office and let us know. Names on this list are only included with permission of the individuals. They will remain on the list for one month, and can be repeated by calling the parish office.

Parish Council: Please feel free to contact a Parish Council member listed here to discuss your views, opinions, or concerns regarding our parish.

Craig Correa— 301-921-9588

Brian deKowzan—443-426-1678

Bulletin notices are due in writing ON FRIDAY, THE WEEK BEFORE THE published date. Notices may be emailed to: esalatto@straphaels.org. Please note that graphic PDF's and graphic page inserts are to be sized 1/4 page and 1/8 page and will be placed as space permits.

Ministry to the Sick: The priests of the parish want very much to make sure that parishioners who are hospitalized or homebound receive pastoral care. We depend on the families and neighbors of parishioners to notify the parish office so we can bring you the sacraments. If you would like to receive Communion, a visit from Priest/Deacon or are going into the hospital please call the parish office. For immediate needs ask for one of the Priests.

The bulletin cover this week

Our Lady of Guadalupe was celebrated December 8 at the 1PM Mass followed by procession to the Trumpet Room, folkloric show, raffles, lunch and a presentation of the Miracle of Tepeyac.

Twelve priests
will be available.

Parish Penance Service

Tuesday, December 17
7:00 PM



The scams keep coming ...

Please do not respond to emails, text messages from con artists masquerading as Father Salah. **This is a fraud.** These messages are **NOT** coming from Father Mike asking for a favor. Do not reply to these solicitations to avoid falling victim to these scammers.



Christmas Eve Masses Tuesday, December 24

4:00PM Church,

Children's Nativity

4:00PM Trumpet Room,

Children's Nativity, Children's Choir

4:00PM Ritchie Park

6:00PM Church Only

Midnight Mass, prelude begins at 11:15PM

Christmas Day Masses Wednesday, December 25

8:30, 10, 11:30AM and 1PM in Spanish

No 7AM or 6PM on Christmas Day

St. Raphael Honor Roll

Please pray for those serving in our armed forces and for those families who have suffered loss.

Daniel Bertrand Del Bianco, USN (d) and family
LT Victor H. Esch, III, USA
Cpt Paul D Galvin
E-3/HN Colleen Gardella
Robert Garret, US Army MP
Taylor Hardy, AE USN
Ens. Andrew Hayes, USN
Jake Klosowski, USNA
Captain Frank Lowery, USN
Commander Mike McNally, USN
Charles McTavish, USA
Col. Ivan Monclova
LT Zachary Poindexter, USN
1LT Will Quackenbush, USA
LT Paul Schauppner, USN
LT James Sheets (USN)
2nd Lt. Andrew Valentine USMA
LT Kenneth Yale, USAF



Remember Those
in the Military

Changes: e-mail esalatto@straphaels.org

A big thank you to our Kimblewick Road neighbors for saying yes to having the parking lot gate open for our weekday Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Masses.

Please be mindful of signs to park on one side of street.

Surviving Divorce Facilitator Training Day Saturday, March 7, 2020

The Office for Family Life and "At the Well" Apostolate for Separated and Divorce Catholics are hosting a full day training for leaders on starting, running, and successfully managing a surviving divorce support group in your parish facilitated by Rose Sweet, creator of the program "Surviving Divorce" on Saturday, March 7, 2020. More details to come. For additional information, contact the Office for Family Life at 301-853-4546 or daniels@adw.org.

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Teams of Our Lady

Marriage is your vocation - start living it. You can have a deep spiritual life in communion with your spouse and Christ - come discover Teams of Our Lady, a Roman Catholic married lay movement that helps you structure and grow your conjugal spiritual life. We will hold an information session on Saturday, January 4, at 1:00 PM at St. John Neumann Church, in the Neumann House (across the street from the church). For more information or to RSVP please contact Mary Singleton, mpksingleton@yahoo.com

Vocations

Men's Discernment Retreat: Archbishop Gregory invites men in their 20's – 40's, who are interested in learning more about the priesthood, to attend a discernment retreat led by priests and seminarians of the Archdiocese of Washington. The retreat will be held the weekend of January 31-February 2, 2020 at Saint John Paul II Seminary in Washington, D.C. The weekend will be an opportunity to pray and reflect on God's call, meet priests and seminarians, hear their stories, and learn more about the seminary and priesthood. Registration is now open at www.DCPriest.org. For more information, contact Fr. Mark Ivany at 202-636-9020 or vocations@adw.org.

Quo Vadis Shadow Day: On Friday, February 7, 2020, juniors and seniors in high school are invited to join the seminarians of the Archdiocese of Washington for a special Quo Vadis "Shadow Day" at Saint John Paul II Seminary and the Catholic University of America. Attendees will be able to experience a "day in the life" of a seminarian by joining them for Mass, Adoration, meals, class, sports and just hanging out. Please register to attend at www.dcpriest.org. For more details, contact Sarah Baugher at vocations@adw.org.

Children Needed for Christmas Eve Nativity



Children's Liturgy of the Word is casting the annual enactment of the Christmas nativity during the Children's Mass at 4:00 PM on Christmas Eve – **in Church and in Trumpet Room**. We still need more children between the ages of

5 to 9 to play the roles of angels and shepherds. Children must be available for a rehearsal on Wednesday, December 18, from 5:00 to 6:30 PM. Costumes are provided. If your child is interested, please email Mary Beaudoin at mbeaudoin@straphaels.org and provide your child's name and age.

Men's Retreat February 7-9, 2020

"Life in Christ: The Gift of the Sacraments"

The Office for Family Life is hosting a Men's Retreat. Join men from around the Archdiocese of Washington for a weekend retreat directed by Fr. Dave Wells and Msgr. Robert Panke. Are you living the graces of a fully sacramental life? What does it mean to live out our baptism, to live a Eucharistic life and to access the grace of the sacrament of reconciliation in our daily lives and relationships? This retreat will help you to reflect on the importance of our sacraments and to reconnect with the most important relationship in your life - your relationship with Christ. The retreat will be held at Priestfield Pastoral Center in Kearneysville, WV. To register go to the following link: <https://2020adwmensretreat.eventbrite.com> or for more information call the Office for Family Life



SAVE THE DATE

- HOLY LAND PILGRIMAGE
- WITH FATHER MIKE
- OCTOBER 4-14, 2020
- Details to come in January 2020

Help Our Marriage

Do you feel alone? Are you frustrated or angry with each other? Do you argue, or have you just stopped talking to each other? Does talking about it only make it worse? Retrouvaille (pronounced retro-vi with a long i) helps couples through difficult times in their marriages. This program has helped many couples experiencing difficulties in their marriage. For confidential information or to register for the upcoming program beginning with a weekend on January 24th - January 26th, 2020, please visit: www.HelpOurMarriage.com, call (443) 400-7017, or email: 3015@retrouvaille.org



Parental and Spousal Bereavement Support Group

The St. Elizabeth Bereavement Ministry will offer an eight-week bereavement support group series for adults who have experienced the death of a parent, spouse or significant other. The series will begin on Wednesday, January 15th and continue for eight consecutive Wednesdays through March 4th. This will be a morning series running from 10:00-11:30 am. There is no fee, but REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED. To register, contact Deacon Kevin Byrne at kevin_byrne@verizon.net or Claudia McAuliffe at 301-881-1457, 917 Montrose Road, Rockville MD 20852.

School News

DECEMBER 15, 2019

A peek behind our classroom doors



For more photos—
and a video—from
the field trip, visit our
Facebook Page

An industrial experience



On their field trip to the Baltimore Museum of Industry, the fourth-grade students take hands-on learning to the next level as they participate in shucking oysters, canning, and printing.



Photos by Roger Pardo

www.straphaelschoolmd.org | www.srnsmd.org |    @SRSrockville

Sponsor-A-Student

Yes! I would like to help educate a new or current student at St. Raphael School / Nursery School who would not be able to attend otherwise.

1 year of SRS tuition:

- ☐ One lump sum of \$9,260
- ☐ Four quarterly installments of \$2,315 each
- ☐ 12 monthly installments of \$772 each

— or —

I will contribute the following amt: \$ _____

My contact information:

Name _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Address _____

I would like

☐ the school to decide who benefits from my gift

☐ my gift to benefit the following student or family: _____

■ St. Raphael is 501(c)(3) nonprofit; your donation should qualify as a charitable deduction. Tax-deductible gifts may not be made to benefit family members. Consult details of your gift with your tax adviser.

■ If paying by check, make payable to "St. Raphael School" with "Sponsor-A-Student" in the memo line, and remit, along with this completed form, to St. Raphael School, Attn: Teri Dwyer, 1513 Dunster Road, Rockville, MD 20854

■ If paying by credit card, visit the school website at www.straphaelschoolmd.org and click "Support Us."

■ For questions, contact Principal Teri Dwyer at tdwyer@straphaels.org or at 301-762-2143.



Sponsor-A-Student

We at St. Raphael School are forever grateful to the many members of our community who were so generous during the construction of the parish Educational Building. At that time, we also heard from those who said they wanted their donation to directly benefit a child, so we introduced Sponsor-A-Student, a program that has assisted several children since its inception in 2011. Many parish families want their child to be in a Christ-centered classroom, but the unfortunate reality is that some simply cannot afford it. Sponsor-A-Student allows friends of St. Raphael to open the doors of our remarkable school for those who wouldn't be able to attend on their own. Won't you consider giving a helping hand to a child right here in your own parish? Your gift of any amount will be eternally appreciated!

**You can make a difference
in the life of a parish child**

www.straphaelschoolmd.org | www.srnsmd.org |    @SRSRockville

Social Responsibility and Outreach (SRO)

Sandy Shamburek, 240-864-2514



Vincentian reflection: In today's Gospel Jesus tells us that the good news can be seen, touched felt and heard through the lives of God's people. We are now charged to take up Jesus's ministry but we can't just ask people to take our word for it; our actions must speak for us. ***Since Christmas is a time of love and gift giving, please share in Jesus ministry by giving a gift to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul so that those who are poor can know the good news of Jesus.***

Thank you St. Raphael! Once again, we had a lovely time to help our guests from two Mission of Charity Houses in Washington, D.C. this past week. This event is not possible without the help of many volunteers, benefactors and last but not least, the SRS students who partake in the event with their service. The 4th grade class participate at the Mass and the 7th and 8th grade class actually served as "wait staff" serving the guests a hot plate of food. Laughter and song filled the room; genuine joy was present.



Advent Giving Tree- Attention all parishioners! The last day to bring in your gift donations is this Sunday, December 15 by 1:00 PM. We need **volunteers** on Sunday, December 15 after the 11:30 AM Mass to move gifts to the Trumpet Room. Please contact Diana Grimm at rgrimm1015@aol.com or 301-762-3818 or Linda Trinh at lindamtrinh@gmail.com or 301-279-0838.



"Instead of death and sorrow, let us bring peace and joy to the world."

~Saint Teresa

Pray an end to late term abortions by Leroy Carhart in Bethesda. Join other concerned pro-lifers for the weekly prayer vigil every Monday morning from 9 to 11 AM on the public sidewalk north of the Wildwood Shopping Center (in front of the Sun Trust Bank) 10401 Old Georgetown Road, Bethesda, MD 20814. Contact Dick Retta, 301-538-2500 for more information. Visit www.prayforbethesda.com for parking instructions.

The wonderful work completed by crisis pregnancy centers: There are about 3,000 crisis pregnancy centers in the United States funded and staffed almost entirely by pro-life people, many being unpaid volunteers. Each pregnancy center provides some or all of the following: ***counseling about abortion alternatives, information about what government help is available, pre-natal care, sonograms so that expectant mothers can see their babies, room and board during and after pregnancy, clothing, baby items, medical services, assistance for other children, assistance***

with adoption, post-natal instruction, help for moms to continue their education, post-abortion counsel and many other services. All of these services are provided free of charge to women with unplanned pregnancies. These centers prevent thousands of abortions each year, assist and care for mothers who are feeling desperate and promote **a culture of LIFE**, instead of the culture of death. The centers and the people which work in them are truly a great blessing!

The culture wants us to conform: St Paul tells us, ***"Do not conform yourself to this age but ...discern...what is good and pleasing to God."*** ~Rom 12:2. Since Roe v. Wade, an estimated 60 million innocent children have lost their God-given right to live. An entire class of persons, children in the womb, have been relegated to the status of "chattel", personal property, who can be disposed of by those more powerful than they. These unborn persons have no power to resist. They are subject to abuse and destruction by those with more power, namely the power of the State. They have no voice that can be heard except our own. Without doubt, the killing of innocent children in the womb is the pre-eminent moral evil of our age. It is for this reason that we must "not conform" to this grave injustice. We must recognize what both medical science and natural justice tell us: children in the womb are human persons with an inalienable right to life. We must instead stand on the side of truth and justice and ***"what is good and pleasing to God"***.

Pro-Life Summit in D.C. next month: If you wish to attend the National Pro-Life Summit on January 25, 2020 in Washington, D.C., please contact Right to Life Montgomery County (RTLMC), Cecilia Ouyang, at 301-365-0936, for free tickets. RTLMC has sponsored students and young professionals to attend this summit for the past 4 years. The theme for this year's Summit is **History Making: Casting a Vision for a Post-Roe America**. For additional information, visit the Summit's website: <https://prolifesummit.com/>.

Youth Ministry

Annie McHugh, 240-864-2519

High School Youth

O Come, Let Us Adore Him (Advent Adoration) – December 15

One of the best ways to prepare your heart for the birth of Christ at Christmas is to spend time with Him in Eucharistic adoration. On December 15, youth group will learn about the season of Advent and then spend time in praise and worship adoration with an opportunity for the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

No Youth Group – December 22 or 29

We will see you in the New Year!

Religious Education

Mary Beaudoin, 301-762-2143, ext. 124



A Family Prayer for Advent

O God our Father, in Jesus you call all Christian families and homes to be signs of living faith. By the light of the Holy Spirit, lead us to be thankful for the gift of faith, and by that gift may we grow in our relationship with Jesus, your Son, and be confident witnesses to Christian hope and joy to all we meet. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Bilingual Advent Calendar

Find a prayer activity for each day of Advent at [www.usccb.org/cs_upload/prayer-and-worship/liturgical-year/advent/291638_1.pdf](http://www.usccb.org/cs/upload/prayer-and-worship/liturgical-year/advent/291638_1.pdf)

Religious Education Calendar

SRRE classes continue through December 17. After Christmas break classes resume January 5. Find the SRRE calendar at <https://www.straphaels.org/religious-education> (scroll down) or contact the SRRE office for a print version.

First Reconciliation and First Eucharist

This week families with children preparing for First Eucharist in May 2020 are completing chapter six of *God's Gift Reconciliation* (for grades 2, 3, and 4) or chapter seven of *Reconciliation: Pardon and Peace* (for grades 5, 6, 7, and 8). High schoolers are reading *The Light of Forgiveness*. All are memorizing the Act of Contrition, one line per week.

*My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart.
In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good,
I have sinned against you whom I should love above all things.*

*I firmly intend, with your help, to do penance, to sin no more,
and to avoid whatever leads me to sin.*

Our Savior Jesus Christ suffered and died for us.

In his name, my God, have mercy. Amen. Families who missed the First Eucharist Listening Rite are asked to download the rite from our webpage, pray the rite at home, and then stop by the SRRE office to pick up the *Illustrated Children's Bible*. Those who missed the Enrollment Rite are asked to pray that rite at home and then bring their child to sign the Enrollment Book in the SRRE office.

Confirmation Student Reminders

Confirmation I students (those in grade 7 or high school preparing for Confirmation in 2021) are working on their Confirmation Service Projects. The focus of these projects is the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy. Anyone who missed the Confirmation Enrollment Rite (Nov. 24) should pray the rite at home with their family (find rite on the SRRE webpage sidebar), then come in to our office to pick up a copy of 57 *Saints*.

All Confirmation II students (those preparing for Confirmation in 2020) have several items due: **Confirmation sponsor forms** (sent from the pastor of the sponsor's current home parish) and **saint projects**. Also due are any **Confirmation service reflection papers** and record sheets not turned in earlier this fall. If you have any questions, please contact the Religious Education office. If you have misplaced your packet, you can find the forms at <https://www.straphaels.org/confirmation-1>.

Catechist Needed for High School Class – Monday Nights

We are very pleased to have a lot of high schoolers in our Religious Education class on Monday nights. In fact, we have so many that we need to split the class into two sections so that we have a Confirmation I section and a Confirmation II section. The class meets at 7:00 until 8:15 PM on Monday nights. Good resources and support are provided. Please contact Mary Beaudoin at 301-762-2143, ext. 124 or mbeaudoin@straphaels.org to learn how you can help with this important ministry.

Open Wide Our Hearts: The Enduring Call to Love



In November 2018, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops published a pastoral letter against racism. You can find the full text of the document at <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/racism/upload/open-wide-our-hearts.pdf>. Here is an excerpt from "Changing Structures" section:

The roots of racism have extended deeply into the soil of our society. Racism can only end if we contend with the policies and institutional barriers that perpetuate and preserve the inequality—economic and social—that we still see all around us. With renewed vigor, we call on the members of the Body of Christ to join others in advocating and promoting policies at all levels that will combat racism and its effects in our civic and social institutions. "Even in the developed world," Pope Francis told members of the U.S. Congress, "the effects of unjust structures and actions are all too apparent. Our efforts must aim at restoring hope, righting wrongs, maintaining commitments, and thus promoting the well-being of individuals and of peoples."⁴⁰ Certainly, we cannot accomplish this task alone. We call on everyone, especially all Christians and those of other faith traditions, to help repair the breach caused by racism, which damages the human family. Ecumenical and interreligious cooperation has been pivotal at key moments in our history, for instance, in the abolition of slavery and during the civil rights era. The leadership of the civil rights movement, especially that of Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., invited ecumenical and interreligious cooperation, as was seen when Catholics, Protestants, and Jews marched together. That spirit is integral to the fight today, and in some communities, the success of this effort will very much depend on this kind of collaboration. As religious leaders, we must continue this tradition.

⁴⁰Pope Francis, Address to the U.S. Congress, Sept. 24, 2015.

Pope Francis' Prayer Intention for December

The Future of the Very Young: That every country take the measures necessary to prioritize the future of the very young, especially those who are suffering.

Adult Faith Formation

suzanne.nelson2@gmail.com 443-472-3730

AFF QUOTE OF THE WEEK



May JOYOUS FAITH lead us to LOVE.
See the poem: <https://allpoetry.com/poem/496440-The-Four-Candles-by-Aino-Makoto>

CONTINUING

EVENING BIBLE STUDY

Psalms: The School of Prayer

Wednesdays, 7:30–9:00 PM - Duffy Center

Concluding on December 18, 2019

For more information please contact

suzanne.nelson2@gmail.com



Q. WHAT IS JOYOUS FAITH?

A.. - CCC#163, 1832

The gift of faith makes it possible for us to “taste” - even now - the goodness of God, to sense God “as he is”, and to *enjoy* God’s presence among us.

This Sunday’s first two Readings focus on the “coming of God.” Isaiah says, “*Be strong, fear not. Here is your God.*” And James encourages us with, “*Make your hearts firm, because the coming of the Lord is at hand.*”

Many things in nature and the culture reflect joy at this time of year. Making a list of them can help us be more aware of our joy. And the Holy Spirit can reveal to us how that joy is a sign of *God with us*.

Will your list be longer than this one?

- Christmas lights
- Longer days and shorter nights
- Visits with family and friends
- Wrapped gifts and generous givers
- New babies and smiling people
- Decorated Christmas trees
- Christmas movies and music
- Christmas cookies and hot chocolate
- The presence of loved ones
- Midnight Mass

ADVENT OPPORTUNITIES

WEEKLY VIDEO REFLECTIONS

Enjoy these short online video reflections:

Week One: [Love Is Coming](#) by Joe Paprocki

Week Two: [Waiting](#) by Tim Muldoon

Week Three: [How Does Hope Shape Us?](#)

by Vinita Hampton Wright

Week Four: [Mary Receiving Jesus into Her Arms](#)

by Becky Eldredge

<https://www.ignatianspirituality.com/advent/>

SACRED ADVENT

Embrace the Advent season as a sacred space from the ease of your e-mail inbox. Each day invites you to slow down for a moment of reflection inspired by the rich Scripture and traditions of Advent.

<https://www.loyolapress.com/our-catholic-faith/liturgical-year/advent/sacred-advent-retreat>

AN ADVENT CALENDAR (clickable)

<http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/liturgical-year/advent/index.cfm>

"LET THE LIGHT ENTER"

An Advent Examination of Conscience

by special arrangement with Twenty Third Publications.

Sunday, December 8 - Saturday, December 14

<https://waterloocatholics.org/online-advent-retreat>

SHARE YOUR ADVENT REFLECTIONS

From Facebook, join our very own private group at

St Raphael Church AFF and post your thoughts and questions.



This spiritual program for women continues on **Wednesday** evenings from **7:00-8:15 PM** in the **Youth Center**. All women of the

parish are cordially invited to attend. For specific dates and more information, please contact:

Suzanne Hren suzannehren@gmail.com or

Fr. Tom Morrow tomorrow1@gmail.com

ANOTHER WAY TO KEEP UP

Go to www.straphaels.org/adult-faith-formation and just click on the links.

BOOKS & LINKS

- **United States Conference of Catholic Bishops**
<http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings-audio.cfm>
- **Word on Fire**
<https://www.wordonfire.org/resources/video>
- **Advent Resources** <https://www.ignatianspirituality.com/advent/>

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