

St. Raphael Catholic Church



"Fr. Tom Morrow addresses the Retreatants on Challenges to Marriage."
Married Couples Retreat—March 18, 2023

1513 Dunster Road Rockville, Maryland 20854

March 26, 2023

Please mail correspondence to the Parish Office
1592 Kimblewick Road, Rockville, MD 20854

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

Rev. Michael Salah, Pastor, ext. 112
Rev. Christian Huebner, Parochial Vicar, 301-762-2143, ext. 150
Email: huebnerc@adw.org
Rev. Thomas Morrow, Retired, ext. 128

Deacon Jose Carbonell, ext. 187
Deacon Richard Meyer, 202-365-0913
Deacon Jim O'Brien, obrien3@verizon.net
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
Krys Psurek, RCIA Coordinator, 240-864-2542
Elaine Salatto, Publications, Welcoming, 240-864-2513

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 or you may register online at: <https://straphaels.org/parish-registration-form>

The Parish Wide Ministry Resource List can be found on our website on the Welcome tab or under Ministries, Social Responsibility, and Documents.

For Life Affirming Resources:

<https://adw.org/about-us/resources/pregnant-need-help/>
Healing after abortion? Project Rachel 301-853-4565

Abuse isn't love. Help is available 24/7 on the National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-SAFE (7233)

Weekend Masses: Saturday: 5:00 PM
Sunday: 7:00, 8:30, 10:00, (children), 11:30AM,
1:00PM (español), 6:00PM (youth)

Weekday Masses: Monday thru Friday: 6:30 and 9:00AM
Saturday: 9:00 AM

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.



LENT



Friday Stations of the Cross

following 9:00AM Mass - Mary's Way
6:30PM English - 7:15PM Spanish



Confessions every Tuesday in Lent

The Light is on for You - 6:30PM
March 28

Tuesday, April 4, 6:30PM
Parish Penance

If you would like to go on
Father Mike's Holy Land Pilgrimage
in October
Please register by Email:
rtemmaus@gmail.com

The Second Collection this weekend, March 25/26, is for Catholic Relief Services

We have been informed by the envelope company that the March 19 offertory envelopes were misprinted.

Adult Confirmation



For adults who have not received the Sacrament of Confirmation and would like to prepare to receive on Pentecost Sunday, May 28, at St. Matthew's Cathedral, please call Krys Psurek at 240-864-2542 and leave a message

or by email RCIA@straphaels.org

GATHER *with us*

For COFFEE AND DONUTS
Sunday, April 2
after the
8:30, 10, 11:30am
and 1:00pm Masses
See you there!

Bulletin notices are due ON THURSDAY, THE WEEK BEFORE THE published date. There are early deadlines for the Easter season. Notices may be emailed to: esalatto@straphaels.org.
This bulletin was transmitted March 21.

Mass Schedule and Intentions for the Week Fifth Week of Lent

Monday, March 27

6:30AM Kurt Schmeisser (d)
9:00AM Rahul Koka

Tuesday, March 28

6:30AM Kurt Schmeisser (d)
9:00AM Carmen Sia Palmaira (d)

Wednesday, March 29

6:30AM Jim & Dolores Weber (d)
9:00AM Victoria Oei

Thursday, March 30

6:30AM Mercedes Maria Stuart (d)
9:00AM Mondragon & Velez Families (d)

Friday, March 31

6:30AM Hernando Rueda (d)
9:00AM Philomena Klein

Saturday, April 1

9:00AM Jim Verme (d)
5:00PM Fr. Christian Jack McGowan (d)

Sunday, April 2 Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord

7:00AM	Fr. Mike	Helen & Edward Janus (d)
8:30AM	Fr. Tom	Members of the Parish
10:00AM	Fr. Christian	Mrs. Lee Heesun (d)
11:30AM	Fr. Mike	Lucia Hernandez
1:00PM	Fr. Christian	Alba Ocampo (d)
6:00PM	Fr. Tom	Ellie Gros

The priest schedule is subject to change.

Live-streamed Masses:

Daily, 6:30AM and Saturday, 9:00AM,
Saturday, Vigil Mass, 5:00PM, and
Sunday, 1:00PM, Spanish

Go to website:

www.straphaels.org and link to YouTube.

Baptisms:

Gia Heidi Sabella	March 18
Luke Preston Phelan	March 18



Please pray for the soul of

Reverend Donald Brice,
Glen Gray nephew of Jan Murray
Ronald J. Fedorowicz, father of Nancy Mayorga



Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord,
and let perpetual light shine upon them.
May the souls of all the faithful departed,
through the mercy of God,
rest in peace. Amen.

Keep praying for our seminarians

Thanks to all who picked a card from the "Vocations Tree." Please keep up the daily prayers for seminarians throughout Lent—and beyond, if you wish. By the way, did you notice each seminarian's card lists his year of formation? Did you wonder what it meant? Archdiocesan seminarians go through many years of formation before ordination. Seminarians who have just graduated from high school work on earning a bachelor's degree in philosophy (*First College, Second College, Third College, Fourth College*). Then they study graduate-level theology (*First Theology, Second Theology, Third Theology, Fourth Theology*). Men who have already earned a bachelor's degree before coming to the seminary may need to spend two years in a pre-theology program (*First Pre-Theology, Second Pre-Theology*) before advancing to graduate-level theology. Before ordination, a seminarian may spend a year at a parish (*Pastoral Year*). Usually a seminarian is ordained a transitional deacon the year before he is ordained a priest. If you picked a deacon, pray for him in a special way: He is preparing for ordination in June, God willing!

Scripture Readings for the Week of March 26, 2023

Sunday Fifth Sunday of Lent
Ez 37:12-14; Ps 130:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8; Rom 8:8-11; Jn 11:1-45

Monday Dn 13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62 or 13:41c-62; Ps 23: 1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6; Jn 8:1-11

Tuesday Nm 21:4-9; Ps 102:2-3, 16-18, 19-21; Jn 8:21-30

Wednesday
Dn 3:14-20, 91-92, 95; Dn 3:52, 53, 54, 55, 56; Jn 8:31-42

Thursday Gn 17:3-9; Ps 105:4-5, 6-7, 8-9; Jn 8:51-59

Friday
Jer 20:10-13; Ps 18:2-3a, 3bc-4, 5-6, 7; Jn 10:31-42

Saturday
Ez 37:21-28; Jer 31:10; 11-12abcd, 13; Jn 11:45-56

Sunday Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion
Procession: Mt 21:1-11
At Mass: Is 50:4-7; Ps 22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24; Phil 2:6-11; Mt 26:14-27:66

As we approach Easter, we focus our daily activities on growing closer to Christ through an increase in prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. May this extend into our lives beyond this liturgical season. Signing up with *Faith Direct* is a great way to focus on almsgiving throughout the year. It is a secure and convenient way to make a conscious decision about your financial support of our many wonderful ministries.

Sign up today by visiting faith.direct/MD34, or call Faith Direct customer service at 866-507-8757. You'll provide us with consistent support that helps us always be at the ready with programs, services, and ministries for our church families and for those in need throughout the community.

Thank you for your continued support of our parish family.

Father Mike
Pastor

Parental, Spousal and Significant-Other Bereavement Support Group

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 sessions will be held virtually using the Zoom format. The Spring series will meet on Thursday evenings at 7 – 8:30 PM, from April 13 - June 1, 2023. There is no fee but registration is required. Space is strictly limited so call early. To register call Deacon Kevin Byrne (301-279-5962) or Claudia McAuliffe (301-881-1457).

Rockville Catholic Summer Program Employment

Looking for an amazing summer job, deepening your faith and meeting other incredible young Catholics? Consider applying to be a counselor at the Rockville Catholic Summer Program, the area's largest Catholic summer camp. Join a staff of over 50 high school and college age teens leading fun camps for 200 campers a week this summer at St. Patrick Church. Best of all, staff attend daily mass, theology talks and adoration as part of their paid day.

Visit www.rockvillecatholicsummer.com/employment for more details!

THE POPE'S INTENTION FOR MARCH For victims of abuse

We pray for those who have suffered harm from members of the Church; may they find within the Church herself a concrete response to their pain and suffering.

CONTACTING THE PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council serves the St. Raphael community by advising the Pastor on matters of concern to parishioners. If you would like the Council to consider a particular issue, please feel free to send an email message to: parishcouncil@straphaels.org.

Married Couples Retreat

The Domestic Church group at St. Raphael facilitated A Married Couples, One Day Retreat, on Saturday, March 18th, 2023. It was attended by fourteen couples, who heard presentations on Individual (Krys Psurek), Couple (Mary Clare Auger) and Family (Fr. Christian Huebner) Prayer; Fr. Tom Morrow spoke on



Challenges to Marriage. Sponsors included the Knights of Columbus Mater Dei Council and the St. Raphael Men's Fellowship (both of who's generosity have made this event available without charge), and the St. Raphael Youth Ministry (for supervised child care).

A future Retreat is planned within the next year, topics under consideration including Unity in Marriage, Nourishing and Flourishing Marriage, Protecting Our Families, Blessing our Families with Values, and Guiding Our Children into Loving Caring Adulthood.

Prayer Vigil to Witness to the Sanctity of Human Life and End Abortion

Now that *Roe v. Wade* has been overturned, your prayers are needed more than ever. Montgomery County officials are actively promoting and supporting abortions. Women and former abortionists report that the prayers and the presence of pro-life witnesses at abortion clinics dissuade women from having an abortion.

Spring 2023 Bethesda 40 Days For Life Prayer Vigil

St. Raphael's is supporting the Spring 2023 Bethesda 40 Days for Life campaign, which tracks the 40 days of Lent, beginning February 22 (Ash Wednesday) and ending April 2nd (Palm Sunday). Incorporating this campaign into your plan of Lenten prayer, fasting and sacrifice is a great way to prepare for Easter.

Our parish will support the Campaign by praying a rosary on the public sidewalk in front of Leroy Carhart's abortion facility at the Wildwood Medical Center, 10401 Old Georgetown Road in Bethesda each Saturday in hourly slots beginning from 10 AM and ending at 4 PM on Saturday, April 1. Please do not go alone, but bring a friend to pray with you. We meet in the vestibule after the Saturday 9 AM Mass if you need help with directions.

The first Saturday of each month also is the Witness for Life event for all 40 Days for Life participants at the same location. If you want more information or to sign up for 1 hour time slots/week at other times from 7 AM to 7 PM daily, see <https://www.40daysforlife.com/en/bethesda>

STOP PHYSICIAN-ASSISTED SUICIDE IN MARYLAND

Pope Francis has spoken about the "throwaway culture." A bill in the Maryland legislature would authorize health professionals to dispense lethal drugs to vulnerable patients. Please go here to tell lawmakers that you are against legalizing physician-assisted suicide in Maryland: <https://p2a.co/Ysg0X9t> or www.mdccatholic.org, click take action.

"NO" ON THE EXTREME AND DANGEROUS ABORTION AMENDMENT

Some lawmakers want to amend the Maryland Constitution to create a fundamental right to take the lives of prenatal babies through all nine months of pregnancy, including stages when premature babies are now routinely born and thrive. Polls show that even people who call themselves pro-choice overwhelmingly say this goes too far. The measure would also likely restrict public health and safety regulations of abortion facilities but do nothing to give women real choices without having to sacrifice their children in order to stay in school and/or keep their careers.

What defines us as a people is how we respond to the urgent issues of our day. Marylanders are urged to tell lawmakers NO to this extreme bill which is out of touch with simple human decency by going to:

<https://p2a.co/SB5M71v> or www.mdccatholic.org, click take action

To learn more about other measures to support families, promote equity in education and full participation of persons with disabilities in society, and more, and how your parish community can be engaged, please go to: www.mdccatholic.org.

THIS WEEK ON FORMED

Week of March 26, 2023



The Hour of Our Death | Eternal Rest | Episode 3

The Anointing of the Sick is one of the seven sacraments of the Church. This session, we discover the role of this sacramental anointing in the spiritual struggle during serious illness, the final stages of our temporal life, and the hour of our death.



The Paschal Mystery: The Mystery of Jesus' Death

Through Jesus' Death on the Cross, God reveals himself most profoundly as the God who is love. Christ's sacrificial love saves us from sin and shows us the pathway to true human happiness. We are made to live like Christ: in total, self-giving love.



Living Lent as a Family (Part 4 of 4)

Dr. Den Akers sits down with Kevin and Lisa Cotter to discuss liturgical living during Lent as a family. They discuss together about a variety of topics, including having a prayer space in the home and decorating the home according to the liturgical season.

Our parish has a FORMED subscription.
Visit signup.formed.org and select our parish name.

An offering from the National Council of Catholic Bishops and United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

The next Holy Mass followed by Healing Prayers

First Tuesday, May 2
7:00 PM



Confessions will continue during Mass.

WAY OF THE CROSS IN WASHINGTON, DC

On Good Friday, April 7th, 2023, the ecclesial movement Communion and Liberation will sponsor the Way of the Cross through downtown Washington, D.C. Participants will gather for the first station at St. Stephen Martyr Catholic Church (2436 Pennsylvania Ave. NW) at 9:45AM. The procession will follow the cross to stations at Farragut Square, Franklin Square, and Freedom Plaza and will end with a final station at St. Patrick's Catholic Church (619 10th St. NW), which will begin around 1:45PM. At each station, there will be readings from the Gospels, meditations, reflections and hymns. All are welcome! For more information, please visit www.wayofthecrossdc.com.



Tenebrae Wednesday, April 5, 7:00PM

The Office of Tenebrae, meaning darkness or shadows, has for centuries been a Holy Week devotion. Following the opening prayer, the service is divided into three Nocturns, each with Psalms and each preceded and concluded by an appropriate antiphon. After the Psalm reading, the Lord's Prayer is prayed by the congregation. Then follows the reading of three Lessons, each with verses and congregational responses. One of the distinguishing features of the service is the extinguishing of the candles and other lights in the church until only a single candle (Christ Candle) symbolizing the Lord's death and burial remains. After the third Nocturn, the service concludes with Psalm 51 and the removal of the Christ Candle for a time. The streptichus is heard (loud noise). The Christ candle is then returned in anticipation of Our Lord's resurrection. At the conclusion of the service, all depart in silence.



LENTEN FASTING & ABSTINENCE



Fasting

Ash Wednesday
Good Friday

Ages 18-59

Abstinence

Every Friday
during Lent

Ages 14+

How do we fast?

When fasting, a person is permitted to eat one full meal, as well as two smaller meals that together are not equal to a full meal.

Am I excused from fasting and abstinence?

Those that are excused from fast and abstinence outside the age limits include the physically or mentally ill including individuals suffering from chronic illnesses such as diabetes. Also excluded are pregnant or nursing women.

For more information on fasting and abstinence, visit uscgb.org.



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2023 Holy Week Schedule



Tuesday, April 4
Parish Penance, 6:30PM

Wednesday, April 5
Tenebrae, 7:00PM*



Holy Thursday, April 6

Morning Prayer, 9:00AM in Church

Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper, bilingual, 7:00PM*
followed by Adoration in the Church



Good Friday, April 7

Morning Prayer 9:00AM in Church

Stations of the Cross

12:00PM in Spanish, 3:00PM in English

Passion of Our Lord-Spanish in Church, 4:00PM

Passion of Our Lord-English in Church, 7:00PM*



Holy Saturday, April 8

Morning Prayer 9:00AM in Church

Confessions 3:45-4:30PM

Easter Vigil, Saturday, April 8, 8:00 PM*



Easter Sunday Masses – April 9

7:00 AM, 8:30 AM

10:00AM, 11:30AM

1:00 PM Spanish Mass

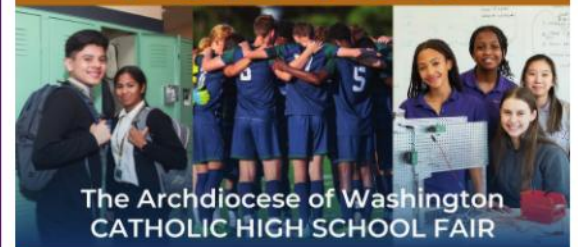
No 6PM



For more information go to our website: www.straphaels.org

*new Mass time

FIND THE RIGHT CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL FOR YOU



The Archdiocese of Washington CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL FAIR

Designed for rising 7th and 8th grade students and their parents, the fair includes exhibits from each Catholic high school, information on financial aid and the admissions process.

LOCATION: The Catholic University of America

DATE: Saturday, April 22, 2023

TIME: 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.



To register, please visit the 2023 Catholic High School Fair section at adwcatholicsschools.org after April 1, 2023.

School News

March 26, 2023

A peek behind our classroom doors

St. Raphael School Springs into Full Bloom!



Girls' Night Out was a huge success, with over twenty amazing vendors there was something for everyone! Thank you to our fantastic Event Chairs - Laura Long and Ewa Kowalska-Turek - and all the volunteers.



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

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT



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

For Students in 6th Grade
27TH ANNUAL VOCATIONS MASS

Wednesday, March 29, 2023
10:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception
4000 Michigan Avenue, NE, Washington, D.C.



Please register your school now—

<https://dcpriest.org/2023-annual-vocations-mass>



Sixth-grade students are encouraged to attend the Annual Vocations Mass on Wednesday, March 29, 2023. Seminarians, priests, and religious sisters and brothers will be present after Mass to meet, speak with, and answer students' questions. For more information, please contact the Office of Priest Vocations at vocations@adw.org. Or, call 202-636-9020.



THE ROMAN CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON

Easter Masses 2023

Saturday, April 8

Easter Vigil at 8:00PM*

Easter Sunday, April 9

7:00 AM

8:30 AM

10:00 AM

11:30 AM

1:00 PM Spanish Mass

No 6:00 PM Mass



***new time**

www.straphaels.org



A VOCATIONS RETREAT FOR YOUNG WOMEN

"IT WAS NOT YOU WHO CHOSE ME, BUT I WHO CHOSE YOU AND APPOINTED YOU TO GO AND BEAR FRUIT THAT WILL REMAIN."

JOHN 15:16

WHO?

all high school
young women

WHERE/WHEN?

-Saturday, April 29, 2023
from 8:30am-4:00pm
-Saint Mary of the Mills
Catholic Church, Laurel
MD

WHAT?

a vocations retreat for
women; we will have talks,
games, adoration, Mass,
time for reflection, snacks,
lunch (chick-fil-a), and
more!

COST

-\$15 per person
-scholarships are available
if necessary

CONTACT

YOUTH@STMARYOFTHEMILLS.ORG

WITH QUESTIONS!

REGISTER USING QR CODE!

WWW.STMARYSLAUREL.ORG/YWRETREAT



Worldwide Marriage Encounter
Experience July 14-16 2023



Your marriage deserves that kind of attention!

- ♥ Non-residential (couples go home each night).
- ♥ The weekend begins on Friday evening, runs all day Saturday, and ends with Mass on Sunday afternoon.
- ♥ It's a time for you and your spouse to be **alone together**: to explore, rediscover, and reconnect with each other.
- ♥ Together, you **focus on your relationship** for an entire weekend.

There is a \$50.00 non-refundable application fee. Each couple has the opportunity to make a voluntary donation at the close of the weekend.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO APPLY ON LINE,
CONTACT: MOMENTS4MARRIAGE.ORG OR WWME.ORG OR
CALL: 301-541-7007**

WWME is faithful to the Roman Catholic Church's teaching that marriage is a covenant that exists between one man and a woman. Any reference to marriage or couple made by WWME is in this context.

Religious Education

Mary Beaudoin, 202-294-7697

CRS Rice Bowl – The Fruit of Our Lenten Sacrifice



CRS Rice Bowl offers a transformative Lenten journey for families and individuals. This Lent we are reflecting on global hunger and taking action to help our sisters and brothers impacted by this injustice. Go to crsricebowl.org to read how CRS helps families and communities, and changes lives.

Lent can feel like a long time. Sometimes we'd like to skip right to Easter! But just like studying for a test, practicing a sport or saving money, we often must do difficult tasks, make sacrifices and overcome obstacles to reach a worthy goal. How are you doing with your Lenten resolutions? How are your prayer, fasting and almsgiving going? Reflect on your Lenten journey and what you would like to accomplish or do differently during the final weeks of Lent to prepare for Easter.

The 40 days we spend praying and doing penance help us prepare to celebrate the Church's greatest feast day. Jesus had to go through his passion and death before he could rise. Our sacrifices enable us to experience—in a small way—Christ's suffering, and they lead us to the joy and wonder of his resurrection.

Donations of your Lenten alms can be made on line. Go to www.crsricebowl.org and click on Donate.

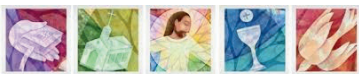
Life Everlasting

Today we celebrate the Fifth Sunday of Lent (Year A). Remember to make time to reflect on the Scripture readings with your family. Readings: <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/031923.cfm>

Key Passage: Jesus said to Martha, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" (John 11:25–26)

... and then have a family sharing time on the questions below:

- ▶ Adults: Christ calls us from death to new life. To what new life are you being called during this Lent?
- ▶ Kids: How does Jesus help you do what is good and avoid what is not?



Faith Formation

Religious Education

St. Raphael Religious Education (SRRE) offers ongoing faith formation for all children and teens, as well as preparation for sacraments. Each year of faith formation is designed to deepen relationships with Jesus and his Church through focus on what we believe, why we celebrate the sacraments, how we pray, and how we live.

Find the SRRE Calendar at our webpage:

<https://www.straphaels.org/religious-education> (scroll down)

No classes on April 2-3 or on April 9-10 (break during Holy Week and Easter Week)

End-of-the-Year Social on May 15

Class Aides Needed

SRRE is in need of class aides to assist in Monday afternoon classes and a Monday night class. Serving as a class aide is a fun way to contribute to your parish and to share your faith. Please contact Mary Beaudoin for details.

First Penance and First Eucharist

Congratulations to all our children who received First Penance and Reconciliation recently. May you continue to seek God's healing and peace in this sacrament throughout your lives. Adults, is it time for you to receive this sacrament again after being away? God is waiting with open arms.



This week children complete chapter 6 of *God's Gift Eucharist* or chapter 6 of *Eucharist: We Give Thanks and Praise* workbooks. Older children are continuing in their *God's Gift Reconciliation and Eucharist* books (chapter 12) and completing the worksheet for each chapter.

First Communion Masses will be celebrated on Saturday, May 6, 2023 at 11:00 AM and 1:00 PM. Rehearsals will be on Wednesday, May 3 (5:00 PM for morning First Eucharist, and 6:00 PM for afternoon First Eucharist).

Confirmation Year 2

Confirmation candidates have received a copy of *40 Conversations with God* (daily Lenten prayers for Confirmation candidates). Confirmation sponsors are asked to join in reflection by signing up for Best Lent Ever videos at <https://www.dynamiccatholic.com/lent>.



Candidates need to turn in the letters to Bishop Feudjio at the Religious Education office this week.

We are pleased that Bishop Jerome Feudjio will be coming to St. Raphael for Confirmation on Saturday, May 13, at 10:30 AM and 1:00 PM Mass time assignments are being made now. Be sure to contact the SRRE office if you are requesting one Mass or the other.

Confirmation Year 1

Confirmation Year 1 students are working on their Confirmation Service Projects. Focusing on the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy, young people complete ten or more hours of service in their parish, neighborhood, and/or broader community. They then write a reflection paper describing how this service is rooted in their baptismal call to follow Jesus. The completed Confirmation Service Project is due September 1, 2023.

Year 1 students will be given a copy of *57 Saints* to read in preparation for choosing a Confirmation saint.

A Prayer for Refugees and Victims of War

Lord God,
No one is a stranger to you
And no one is ever far from your loving care.
In your kindness, watch over refugees and victims of war,
Those separated from their loved ones,
Young people who are lost,
And those who have left home or who have run away from home.
Bring them back safely to the place where they long to be,
And help us always to show your kindness to strangers and to all in need.
- Author Unknown



Marriage Moments

Feeling bored or sad? "Do not abandon yourself to sorrow, do not torment yourself with brooding." (Sirach 30:21) There's plenty of sorrow these days but look for a positive side to misfortune. For example: If I'm sick, maybe I can finally read that book. Try it. You might be a more pleasant person to be around.

Parenting Pointers

Simple lifestyle need not mean living in destitution, but we must never be so isolated from the poor that we fail to be touched by their pain. For example, if our own neighborhood is not poor, can we find ways to come into face to face contact with people who have less than us?

Living *Laudato Si'* - Eco-Tips

Planet Earth supports our lives. We must take care of it. In Pope Francis' encyclical, LAUDATO SI', he calls not only on Catholics, but all humanity to care more vigorously for creation. Here are 2 ways:

CLOTHING

EASY: Clothing, particularly petroleum based garments, are often treated with flame retardant chemicals (PFAS). Learn ways to "greenify" your closet [here](https://www.sierraclub.org/sierra/2020-6-november-december/taste-test/smart-ways-greenify-your-closet), (<https://www.sierraclub.org/sierra/2020-6-november-december/taste-test/smart-ways-greenify-your-closet>)

CHALLENGING: Get involved in your local [fibershed](https://fibershed.org/) community! (<https://fibershed.org/>)

Also, be sure to see the documentary of Pope Francis' meeting with activists from the Brazilian Amazon, India, Senegal and the U.S. "The Letter: A Message For Our Earth" is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rps9bs85BIU>

*Marriage Moments, Parenting Pointers, and Eco-Tips by Susan Vogt, www.SusanVogt.net

Christus Vivit

To Young People and to the Entire People of God



Christus vivit (Christ is alive) is a post-synodal apostolic exhortation of Pope Francis, written in response to the Fifteenth Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, on young people, faith, and vocational discernment. That synod was held in October 2018. This

week we continue Chapter Three: You Are the Now of God.

Desires, hurts, and longings

81. Young people are aware that the body and sexuality have an essential importance for their lives and for their process of growth in identity. Yet in a world that constantly exalts sexuality, maintaining a healthy relationship with one's body and a serene affective life is not easy. For this and other reasons, sexual morality often tends to be a source of "incomprehension and alienation from the Church, inasmuch as she is viewed as a place of judgment and condemnation." Nonetheless, young people also express "an explicit desire to discuss questions concerning the difference between male and female identity, reciprocity between men and women, and homosexuality."

82. In our times, "advances in the sciences and in biomedical technologies have powerfully influenced perceptions about the body, leading to the idea that it is open to unlimited modification. The capacity to intervene in DNA, the possibility of inserting artificial elements into organisms (cyborgs) and the development of the neurosciences represent a great resource, but at the same time they raise serious anthropological and ethical questions." They can make us forget that life is a gift, and that we are creatures with innate limits, open to exploitation by those who wield technological power. "Moreover, in some youth circles, there is a growing fascination with risk-taking behavior as a means of self-exploration, seeking powerful emotions and gaining attention... These realities, to which young generations are exposed, are an obstacle to their serene growth in maturity."

83. Young people also experience setbacks, disappointments and profoundly painful memories. Often they feel "the hurt of past failures, frustrated desires, experiences of discrimination and injustice, of feeling unloved and unaccepted." Then too "there are moral wounds, the burden of past errors, a sense of guilt for having made mistakes." Jesus makes his presence felt amid these crosses borne by young people; he offers them his friendship, his consolation and his healing companionship. The Church wants to be his instrument on this path to interior healing and peace of heart.

84. In some young people, we can see a desire for God, albeit still vague and far from knowledge of the God of revelation. In others, we can glimpse an ideal of human fraternity, which is no small thing. Many have a genuine desire to develop their talents in order to offer something to our world. In some, we see a special artistic sensitivity, or a yearning for harmony with nature. In others, perhaps, a great need to communicate. In many of them, we encounter a deep desire to live life differently. In all of this, we can find real starting points, inner resources open to a word of incentive, wisdom and encouragement.

85. The Synod dealt in particular with three areas of utmost importance. Here I would like to quote its conclusions, while recognizing that they call for greater analysis and the development of a more adequate and effective ability to respond.

(to be continued next week)



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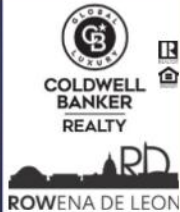
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