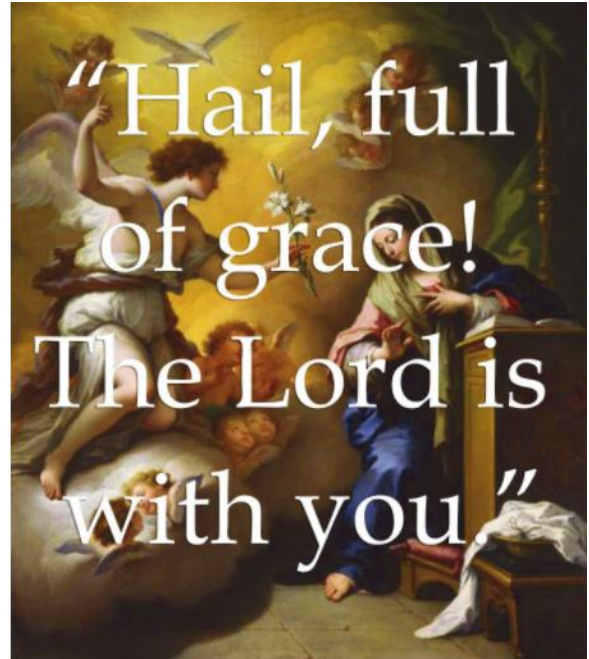
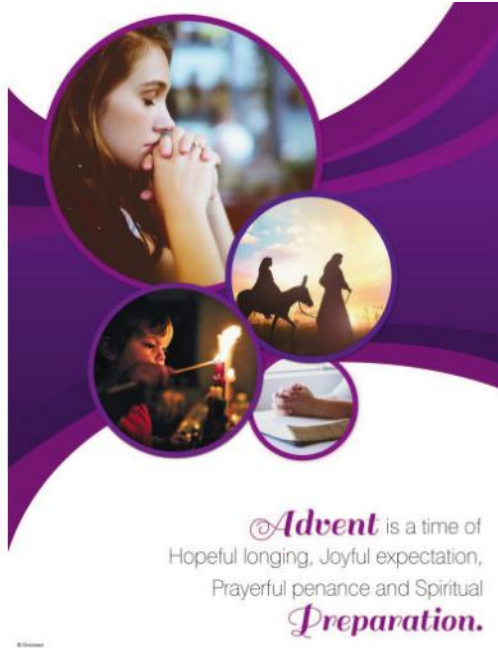


St. Raphael Catholic Church



1513 Dunster Road Rockville, Maryland 20854

December 3, 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
Teri Dwyer, Principal, ext. 121
Julie Cress, School Admissions, ext. 158 or jcress@straphaels.org
Luisa Duarte, Spanish Coordinator, 240-864-2565
Eileen Kutchak, Dir. of Parish Programming, ext. 110
Pietro Lojano, 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 Ministry List** can be found on our website,

St. Vincent de Paul/St. Raphael Conference
Intake Number: 240-447-7027

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: Sunday: 7:00, 8:30, 10:00, (children), 11:30AM, 1:00PM (español), 6:00PM (youth)
Saturday: 5:00 PM
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: no Tuesday Exposition
Thursday: 9:30 AM
Benediction: This week time change: Thursday, 6:30PM
No Tuesday Novena and Chaplet

Sacrament of Baptism: Parish Registration and a Baptism class is required. Please contact Eileen Kutchak, 240-864-2510, 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.

Advent Giving Tree 2023

The Advent Giving Tree is back at St. Raphael's! The need is even greater this year and we know that our generous parishioners will be happy for the opportunity to help the wonderful organizations that we support annually at Christmas.

Please purchase any number of **\$25 TARGET or WALMART GIFT CARDS** and get them to us by **DECEMBER 10, 2023**, so that they can be distributed before the holiday.

There are two ways you can do this:

- Bring gift cards in an envelope labeled "Advent Giving Tree" to **St. Raphael's Parish Office** located behind the church on Kimblewick Road. If the office is closed, please place the envelope in the mail slot by the door.

OR

- Mail gift cards to:

St. Raphael's Church
Attn: Eileen Kutchak/Advent Giving Tree
1513 Dunster Road
Rockville, MD 20854

As in past years we will be supporting St. Martin of Tours Church in DC, New Leaf Shelter, Mission of Mercy, Interfaith Works Women Center, St. Ann's Center, Children Hospital-Oncology Unit, Christ House DC, the Betty Krahne Center, St. Vincent De Paul/St. Raphael Conference, the Stepping Stones Shelter in Rockville, and Gabriel Network

In addition, we will also continue to support our **ANGEL GIFTS** recipients. You can support the following organizations by making online donations through their websites:

Little Sisters of the Poor: www.littlesistersofthepoorwashingtondc.org

Montgomery Hospice: www.montgomeryhospice.org

If you have any questions or concerns, please email

Anna Frankford at acfrankford@gmail.com

Janice Frankford at jwfrankford@yahoo.com

Mass Schedule and Intentions for the Week First Week of Advent

Monday, December 4

6:30AM Deacon Robert Price (d)
9:00AM Thomas Dunne (d)

Tuesday, December 5

6:30AM Patrick Kline (d)
9:00AM Thomas Dunne (d)
7:00PM Barbara Wrazien (d)

Wednesday, December 6

6:30AM Drexel England (d)
9:00AM Helen & Edward Janus (d)

Thursday, December 7

6:30AM Lawrence Leong (d)
9:00AM Sheeba Varughese
7:00PM Thomas McDaniel (d)

Sp Vigil

Friday, December 8

Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

6:30AM Jack Butler (d)
9:00AM Timothy McGuire (d)
4:30PM Richard Ingardia (d)
7:00PM Miguel Martinez & Jim Edmonson (d)

Saturday, December 9

9:00AM Helga Castro (d)
5:00PM Fr. Mike Dr. Joseph & Eileen Zigarelli (d)

Sunday, December 10

7:00AM	Fr. Tom	Aaron & Denise Young
8:30AM	Fr. Christian	Patrick D. Young (d)
10:00AM	Fr. Mike	Christy Fellows Hadwen (d)
11:30AM	Fr. Tom	Paul & Linda Saah (d)
1:00PM	Fr. Christian	Members of the Parish
6:00PM	Fr. Mike	Jean Travis Roche (d)

The priest schedule is subject to change.

Holy Mass followed by Healing Prayers

December 5, 7:00 PM

Confessions will continue during
Mass and Healing Prayers.

The Novena prayers are not recited
on Mass and Healing Prayer
Tuesdays.

Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary a Holy Day of Obligation December 8, 2023



Thursday, December 7

7PM Spanish Vigil Mass

Reposition of Blessed Sacrament at 6:30PM Thursday

Friday, December 8

6:30AM

9:00AM (school attends)

4:30 and 7:00PM

**This weekend, December 2/3 the ushers will
resume passing the offertory basket, pew by pew, at
the Sunday Vigil and Sunday Masses.**

Baptisms: November 25

Adriano Cerruto
Luciano Ellis Cerruto
Julia Marie Smyth
Holly Marie Wido
Violet Grace Wido

Please pray for the soul of

Maria de Jesus Gonzalez

Francisco Arias

Tomas Arias

William Niner

Raymond Bratschi, father of Rose Gilmore

Mrs. Geraldine Louise Wadsworth,

mother of Rev. Bill Wadsworth



**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.**

Next weekend, December 9/10 the second collection will be for the Religious Retirement Fund. Thank you for your generosity.

Live-streamed Masses:

There will be daily live-streamed Masses,
Sunday English and Spanish Masses.
Go to website: www.straphaels.org and click the
link to YouTube Channel.

Prayer Corner

December 3, 2023

As we begin Advent this week, we turn to the special ways of prayer that are handed on in the Church for this season. Each Sunday, for instance, we will light our Advent wreath in the sanctuary, and many others will be lit in our homes.



Nativity creches are another very precious way to prepare in prayer during Advent. This custom of organizing visible, tactile representations of the Lord's birth at Bethlehem originated 800 years ago with St. Francis of Assisi and continues to our day as a cherished form of contemplating Jesus Christ. During Advent, when we leave the manger empty until Christmas, Nativity scenes help raise our minds and desires in anticipation of the Lord's coming.

The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. The Son of God, the Eternal Word, became man among us at a particular time and place, and in a particular way. We will never be able to finish wondering at how Jesus chose to be born among us, in the stable at Bethlehem. It is something that can be explained to a child and yet never fully comprehended even by the wisest of adults. May we all be drawn into this wonder around Nativity scenes this year.



BITTERSWEET NEWS

mu&ic MINISTRY

After many, many years of planning, playing, singing and directing the youth music ministry at the Sunday 6PM Mass, beginning next Sunday, December 10, Daniel Owens will be moving on to spend his Sunday afternoons and evenings with his family.

We are grateful for all Daniel has done for St. Raphael; he will be missed.

God Bless you, Daniel.



CAMINA CON MARIA | MAGLAKAD KASAMA SI MARIA | MARCHE AVEC MARIE | CAMINHAR COM MARIA | 与圣母同行

Walk with Mary

The Virgin said to Juan Diego: "Listen and understand, my littlest son, let nothing frighten and afflict you or trouble your heart ... Am I not here, I, who am your mother?"

SÁBADO * SATURDAY
DICIEMBRE * DECEMBER 9, 2023

PROCESIÓN * PROCESSION
11:00 a.m. ET

De la Párrquia del Santuario del Sagrado Corazón a la
Basílica del Santuario Nacional de la Inmaculada Concepción
From the Shrine of the Sacred Heart Parish to the
Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception

ROSARIO * ROSARY
1:00 p.m. ET

MISA * MASS
2:00 p.m. ET

Principal Celebrant:
WILTON CARDINAL GREGORY
Archbishop of Washington

Concelebrant:
BISHOP EVELIO MENJIVAR
Auxiliary Bishop of Washington

For ASL Interpretation, contact deafcatholic@adw.org two weeks in advance.

For more information, visit adw.org/walkwithmary or contact us at 301-863-5335 or culturaldiversity@adw.org.
Sponsored by the Office for Cultural Diversity and Outreach.

The Roman Catholic
Archdiocese of
Washington

Anima Christi

Soul of Christ, sanctify me.
Body of Christ, save me.
Blood of Christ, embolden me.
Water from the side of Christ, wash me. Passion of Christ, strengthen me.
O good Jesus, hear me. Within your wounds hide me.
Never permit me to be parted from you. From the evil Enemy defend me.
At the hour of my death call me and bid me come to you,
that with your Saints I may praise you for age upon age.
Amen.



<https://www.usccb.org/prayers/anima-christi>

CHRISTMAS CARDS

**Religious
Christmas Cards
for Sale**

The **Respect Life Committee** will be selling religious Christmas cards in the **Trumpet Room on December 3** to support Montgomery County Right to Life. Please plan to purchase your Christmas cards as you enjoy coffee and donuts.

The Respect for Life committee invites you to sign up to commit to pray three Memorares each day <https://memorares4maryland.org/index.php>

Blessed Mother Mary, child of the Father, mother of the Son, spouse of the Holy Spirit, intercede for us to protect the lives of Maryland's babies and the souls of her children.

**See you at Coffee and Donuts Today
Sunday, December 3**

after 8:30, 10, 11:30 AM and 1:00 PM Masses.

HOPE

The St. Raphael Flower Arranging Committee is looking for a few people to help decorate the church and trumpet room for Christmas. We will meet at 12 noon on Saturday, December 23. Please call Donna Herndon for details 301-404-0395.

If you are approached by someone in church or parking lot in need of help, please hand them a bulletin. The SVdP intake number is also on bulletin front cover.



The Society of St. Vincent de Paul
St. Raphael Catholic Church Conference
1513 Dunster Road Rockville MD 20854
240-447-7027 - Intake

If you or someone you come in contact with are in need of financial help for utilities, housing, food, or other needs, please call the phone number above. If no one answers, leave a message, giving your name and phone number, repeating the phone number a second time.

You will receive a call from one of our members within 24 hours. If you don't receive a return call in 24 hours, please call again to make sure the message wasn't missed.

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? Retrouvaille (retro-vi) has helped tens of thousands of couples. For confidential information or to register for the upcoming program beginning with a **weekend on January 26th**, please visit: www.HelpOurMarriage.org, call (443) 400-7017, or email us at: 3015@HelpOurMarriage.org

Scripture Readings for the Week of December 3, 2023

Sunday First Sunday of Advent
Is 63:16b-17, 19b; 64:2-7; Ps 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19; 1 Cor 1:3-9; Mk 13:33-37

Monday
Is 2: 1-5; Ps 122:1-2, 3-4b, 4cd-5, 6-7, 8-9; Mt 8:5-11

Tuesday Is 11:1-10; Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17; Lk 10:21-24

Wednesday Is 25:6-10a; Ps 23:1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6; Mt 15:29-37

Thursday Memorial of Saint Ambrose, Bishop and Doctor of the Church
Is 26:1-6; Ps 118:1 and 8-9, 19-21, 25-27a; Mt 7:21, 24-27

Friday Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Gn 3:9-15, 20; Ps 98:1; 2-3ab, 3cd-4; Eph 1:3-6, 11-12; Lk 1:26-38

Saturday
Is 30:19-21, 23-26; Ps 147:1-2, 3-4, 5-6; Mt 9:35-10:1, 5a, 6-8

Sunday Second Sunday of Advent
Is 40:1-5, 9-11; Ps 85:9-10, 11-12, 13-14; 2 Pt 3:8-14; Mk 1:1-8

In honor of Our Lady of Fatima and to make reparation for the offenses committed against the Immaculate of Heart of Mary

The World Apostolate of Fatima, Archdiocese of Washington Division, "The Blue Army"

Invites you to

Rosary, Mass, Confession, Divine Mercy Chaplet, Brown Scapular enrollment, and healing prayers.

Wednesday, December 13 at 1:00PM

in the Immaculate Heart of Mary Chapel,
Basilica of the National Shrine, Michigan Ave, DC.

THE POPE'S INTENTION FOR DECEMBER

For persons with disabilities

We pray that people living with disabilities may be at the center of attention in society, and that institutions may offer inclusive programs which value their active participation.

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 parishioner issue, please feel free to send an email message to: parishcouncil@straphaels.org.

**THE HOLY LAND CHRISTIANS ARE OUR GUESTS
HEAR THEIR STORY AND BEHOLD THEIR BEAUTIFUL
OLIVE-WOOD CRAFTS**

On **December 16-17**, we will be hosting at the Trumpet Room a nice display of handmade olivewood religious carvings from Bethlehem and Jerusalem available for purchase. These carvings include olive wood nativity sets, crucifixes, rosaries, Christmas ornaments, candle holders, angles and many other religious crafts that make nice wedding, baptism, Easter, and especially Christmas gifts.

These carvings are handmade by Christian families in Bethlehem who rely on sales for their daily bread. For more than ten years Bethlehem Christians have been enduring many hardships as tourism in Bethlehem has plummeted due to the ongoing conflict and the COVID 19 pandemic. Many Christians were forced to leave their homeland. The Christian population of the Holy Land went down from 30% in the last century to almost 1% today.

Please help support our Christian brothers and sisters in Bethlehem by purchasing their carvings. George Ghanem, an indigenous Christian from Bethlehem will be standing by the carvings after all masses. Let us together keep Bethlehem a Christian town forever.



Mark your Calendar

Parish Penance

**Tuesday, December 19
7:00PM**

Did you Know?

This year, the Fourth Sunday of Advent Masses **end** with the 1PM Mass on Sunday, December 24, and the Christmas Eve Masses **begin** at 4:00 PM on Sunday, December 24. **To plan ahead, the Mass schedule below reflects both Mass obligations.**



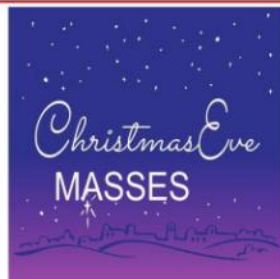
**FOURTH SUNDAY
OF
Advent
Masses**

**Saturday, December 23
5:00PM**

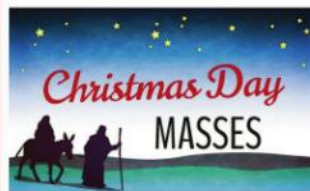
**Sunday, December 24
7:00, 8:30, 10:00,
11:30AM and 1:00PM**

welcome

**St Raphael Catholic Church
www.straphaels.org
301-762-2143**



**Sunday, December 24
4:00PM Church
4:00PM Trumpet Room
6:00PM Church
8:00PM Spanish
11:00PM (10:30 prelude)**



**Monday, December 25
8:30, 10:00, 11:30AM
1:00 PM (Spanish)
No 7:00AM and
No 6:00PM Masses**

St. Martin of Tours

**"Christ-Lock: Identity
Theft no More!"**

Advent Parish Mission 2023



Led by Fr. Bill Garrott, O.P.

6:30 pm - 9:00 pm Each evening

MONDAY, DECEMBER 4 "Where is your faith?"

Fr. Bill's preaching focuses on what Faith is and is not in light of current challenges. The evening concludes with an invitation to venerate a 1st class relic of St. John Paul II – a piece of the blood-soaked white sash he wore on the day he was shot in St. Peter's Square.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 5 "Bad Anger or Good Anger?"

Fr. Bill's preaching focuses on the emotion, the virtue and the sin of anger in light of the polarized culture we live in. The evening concludes with an invitation for those in need of healing to adore our Eucharistic Lord in the Blessed Sacrament.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6 "Take away the stone!"

Fr. Bill's preaching focuses on the power of the Risen Lord to heal us and make us participants in God's great rescue mission of mercy. The evening concludes with a solemn blessing and an invitation to receive a special blessing with the Oil of St. Joseph from the Oratory of St. Joseph in Montreal.

WWW.STMARTINSWEB.ORG | 301-990-3203



School News

DECEMBER 3, 2023



A peek behind our classroom doors

Angels on the Run: Color Run 2023



This year's AOR was quite colorful! The 1 mile winner was 5th grader, Jack, and right behind him was 6th grader, Keegan. Our 5K adult winner was SRS and SRNS parent Geoff and the youth winner was former student Colin. We can't wait for next year!



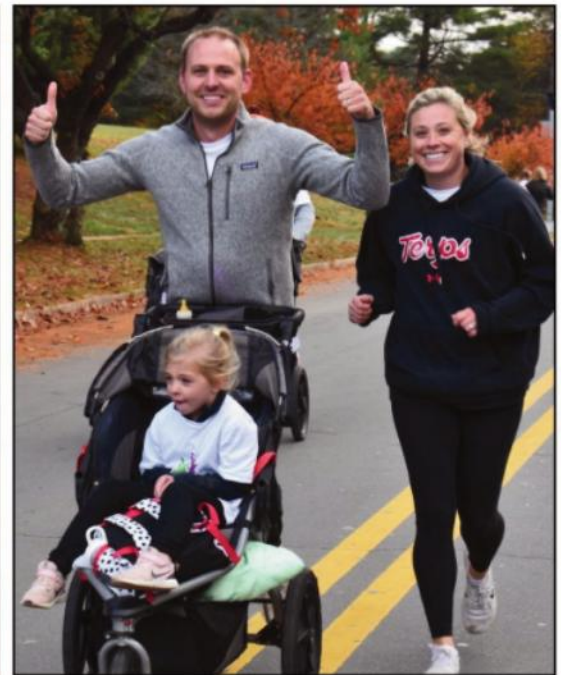
www.straphaelschoolmd.org | www.srnsmd.org |    @SRSrockville

**A Special Thanks
to our
Premier and
Platinum Sponsors:**

Orangetheory Fitness

Chevy Chase Implant
& Oral Surgery

DC Endodontics



www.straphaelschoolmd.org | www.srnsmd.org | [f](#) [t](#) [i](#) @SRSrockville

The St. Martin's and St. Raphael's Twinning Committee would like to express our warmest gratitude to everyone in the parish for your generous contributions to our recent Thanksgiving Food and Coat drive. We collected over 233 gift cards and more than 96 boxes of food which went to create hundreds of Blessing Baskets to share with families in need in the neighborhoods surrounding St. Martin's. In addition, we collected more than 50 bags of coats and winter gear to share with that community. Amazing!

Just as amazing is the fact that we were once again blessed with **SO MANY** volunteers, many of whom had stepped up to help us in past years. These teens and adults volunteered their time to collect donations, sort food and clothing, supervise our student volunteers, load cars or drive food down to St. Martin's. We could not have done it without your help! **THANK YOU!**

It is because of everyone's willingness to share their time, talents and treasures that so many have benefited.

"For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me..." Matthew 25

*The St. Martin's and
St. Raphael's Twinning Committee*



The annual St. Jude Christmas tree and wreath sale of balsam trees will be conducted on the lawn next to the Thaddeus Room, 12701 Veirs Mill Rd, Rockville. The prices are: \$60 per tree and \$30 per wreath. The sale is sponsored by the Knights of Columbus, St. Joseph Manyanet Council #5567. The profits are used to help the Church and the needy. This event will beheld on December 8 (Friday) from 3-6 PM; December 9 (Saturday) from 9AM-5PM and December 10 (Sunday) from 9 AM-3PM.

ST. RAPHAEL'S MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

PRESENTS:

THY KINGDOM COME 10 DYNAMIC SPEAKERS INCLUDING:



Kevin Wells
Best Selling Author



Fr. Dave Flivonka, TOR
The Wild Goose Series



Jason Evert
The Chastity Project



Fr. Leo Patalinghug
Playing with Grace



Steve Bollman
That Man Is You

WHEN

Saturdays 6:00 AM - 7:45 AM

TMIY is back and we are nearing the end of the semester. Nonetheless, this may be the most powerful session yet. Jeff Joaquin, a TMIY core team leader for well over a decade, shares his story - ultimately, a story of God's unfathomable mercy.



More info

Build the Kingdom - Bring a Friend:

LORD, MAKE US TURN
TO YOU! LET US SEE
YOUR FACE AND WE
SHALL BE SAVED.

First Sunday

Stay awake! For you do
not know on which day
your Lord will come.

Matthew 24:42



CELEBRATE THE HOLIDAY SEASON
WITH US

CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

DECEMBER 10
10:00AM TO 3:00PM

CHRIST THE KING CATHOLIC CHURCH
2300 EAST WEST HIGHWAY
SILVER SPRING, MD 20910

Religious Education

Mary Beaudoin, 202-294-7697

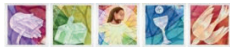


Resources for Celebrating Advent at Home

Find family activities for Advent at Catholic websites and blogs, such as Loyola Press, Sadlier, Catholic Sprouts, Blessed Catholic Mom, and Catholic Apostolate Center.

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 Masses at 4:00 PM on Christmas Eve. There will be two Masses at 4:00 PM— one in the Church and another in the Trumpet Room. We are seeking 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 20, 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.



Religious Education Classes

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. SRRE weekly classes began on September 17 and our Family Catechesis program is underway. Parents can still register their children and teens for SRRE and sacrament preparation and complete missed lessons at home. Find the registration link at <https://www.straphaels.org/religious-education>.

Find the Religious Education Calendar at <https://www.straphaels.org/religious-education> (Scroll down; use arrows to find upcoming months.)

Contact Mary Beaudoin for information on faith formation and sacrament preparation.



The SRRE Office coordinates sacrament preparation for all children ages 7-18. This includes Baptism, Confirmation, Reconciliation, and Eucharist. Please contact Mary Beaudoin for information.

SRRE Calendar

Find the SRRE Calendar at our webpage:

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

Here are a few highlights:

- Christmas Break on December 24-25 and December 31-January 1
- SRRE Classes resume on January 7 and 8
- No classes on January 14-15 or on February 18-19
- Spring Break during Holy Week and Easter Week, March 24-25, and March 31-April 1
- End-of-the-Year Social on May 13



First Penance and First Eucharist Notes

This week families with children preparing for First Eucharist in April and May 2024 are completing the first four chapters of *God's Gift Reconciliation* (younger children) or *God's Gift Reconciliation and Eucharist* (older children).

Our First Reconciliation Get-Ready Morning will be held on Saturday, January 20, 9:30-11:30 AM in the Trumpet Room

First Penance/Reconciliation is scheduled for Wednesday, January 31, at 7:00 PM, and Saturday, February 3, at 10:30 AM.

Confirmation Year I and Year II Notes

• Confirmation Year 1 students are starting 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, 2024.

• Candidates for Confirmation in May 2024 (Confirmation Year 2) are working on their Saint Project and prayerfully identifying a Confirmation sponsor. The Saint Project and Confirmation Sponsor Certificate are due January 26. (Note that the late Confirmation Service Projects are due on December 15.)

• For those families who missed the Confirmation Year I or Confirmation Year II meetings during earlier this fall, the Powerpoint presentations are now available. Please contact the SRRE office to receive a link to the presentations.

• We are pleased that Bishop Bishop Evelio Menjivar will be coming to St. Raphael for Confirmation on Saturday, April 20, at 10:30 AM and 1:00 PM.

• Find Confirmation preparation forms at <https://www.straphaels.org/confirmation-1>

Christ Promises to Restore and Renew His People

"Our world is hurting. We all need healing, yet many of us are separated from the very source of our strength. Jesus Christ invites us to return to the source and summit of our faith in the celebration of the Eucharist. The National Eucharistic Revival is a movement to restore understanding and devotion to this great mystery here in the United States by helping us renew our worship of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist." -

<https://www.eucharisticrevival.org/>

Pope Francis invites us "to discover anew the sense of wonder and awe at the Lord's great gift of himself and to spend time with him in the celebration of the Holy Mass and in personal prayer and adoration before the Blessed Sacrament."

Children and teens enjoy "making a visit" to the Blessed Sacrament. It can be a welcome refuge of silence and a nudge to contemplative prayer.

Find ideas for Adoration for Children at

TeachingCatholicKids.com [https://](https://www.teachingcatholickids.com/eucharistic-adoration/)

www.teachingcatholickids.com/eucharistic-adoration/

Adoration for Teens and Young Adults: <https://bustedhalo.com/ministry-resources/a-beginners-guide-to-eucharistic-adoration>

All are welcome to our parish Adoration on Thursdays after 9:00 AM Mass through 7:15PM and to the Family Holy Hour on First Fridays at 6:00 PM. The church is open every day for anyone who wants to spend time in quiet prayer.



God's Faithfulness

Today we begin Year B in the cycle of Sunday readings with the First Sunday of Advent. Remember to make time to reflect on the [Scripture readings](https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/120323.cfm) with your family: <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/120323.cfm>

Reading I Isaiah 63:16–17, 19, 64:2–7 (prayer for the return of God's favor)

Reading II 1 Corinthians 1:3–9 (thanksgiving)

Gospel Mark 13:33–37 (need for watchfulness)

Key Passage: God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. (1 Corinthians 1:9)

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

- ▶ Adults: How do you know when you're following Christ and living his teachings faithfully?
- ▶ Kids: What good thing might God be asking you to do right now?

Synod on Synodality

Over three weeks in October, Catholic clergy and laypeople gathered in Rome for an assembly, which was part of the multiyear Synod on Synodality. Below are excerpts from the synthesis report from that gathering. The report is entitled *A Synodal Church on Mission* and Part 1 is "The Face of the Synodal Church."

Matters for Consideration

Building on the reflective work already undertaken, there is a need to clarify the meaning of synodality at different levels, in pastoral, theological, and canonical terms. This helps to avert the risk that the concept sounds too vague or generic or appears as a fad or fashion. It enables us to offer a broad understanding of walking together with further theological deepening and clarification. Likewise, it is necessary to clarify the relationship between synodality and communion and between synodality and collegiality.

A desire emerged to enhance understanding and appreciation of the differences in the practice and understanding of synodality between the tradition of the Christian East and the Latin Tradition, including in this ongoing synodal process, by fostering encounters between them.

In particular, the many expressions of synodal life in cultural contexts where people are used to walking together as a community and where individualism has not taken root, should be considered for deeper reflection. In this way, synodal practice plays an important part in the Church's prophetic response to an individualism that causes people to turn in on themselves, a populism that divides, and a globalisation that homogenises and flattens. Although not solving these problems, it nonetheless provides an alternative way of being and acting for our times, integrating a diversity of perspectives. This is a hopeful alternative that needs further exploration and illumination.

Link to Synthesis Report: <https://www.synod.va/en/synodal-process/the-universal-phase/documents.html>

Laudate Deum

This year on the feast of Saint Francis of Assisi, Pope Francis released a new apostolic exhortation on the climate crisis. Laudate Deum is addressed to "all people of good will."

"Praise God for all his creatures." This was the message that Saint Francis of Assisi proclaimed by his life, his canticles and all his actions. In this way, he accepted the invitation of the biblical Psalms and reflected the sensitivity of Jesus before the creatures of his Father:

"Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these" (Mt 6:28-29). "Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten in God's sight" (Lk 12:6). How can we not admire this tenderness of Jesus for all the beings that accompany us along the way!

https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/20231004-laudate-deum.html

Christus Vivit To Young People and to the Entire People of God



Christus vivit (Christ is alive) is an 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 Seven: Youth Ministry.

A "popular" youth ministry - continued

236. Youth ministry, when it ceases to be elitist and is willing to be "popular," is a process that is gradual, respectful, patient, hopeful, tireless and compassionate. The Synod proposed the example of the disciples of Emmaus (cf. Lk 24:13-35) as a model of what happens in youth ministry.

237. "Jesus walks with two disciples who did not grasp the meaning of all that happened to him, and are leaving Jerusalem and the community behind. Wanting to accompany them, he joins them on the way. He asks them questions and listens patiently to their version of events, and in this way he helps them recognize what they were experiencing. Then, with affection and power, he proclaims the word to them, leading them to interpret the events they had experienced in the light of the Scriptures. He accepts their invitation to stay with them as evening falls; he enters into their night. As they listen to him speak, their hearts burn within them and their minds are opened; they then recognize him in the breaking of the bread. They themselves choose to resume their journey at once in the opposite direction, to return to the community and to share the experience of their encounter with the risen Lord."

238. Various manifestations of popular piety, especially pilgrimages, attract young people who do not readily feel at home in ecclesial structures, and represent a concrete sign of their trust in God. These ways of seeking God are seen particularly in young people who are poor, but also those in other sectors of society. They should not be looked down on, but encouraged and promoted. Popular piety "is a legitimate way of living the faith" and "an expression of the spontaneous missionary activity of the People of God."

Sowing Peace – January 24 at St. Raphael

The Potomac Area Interfaith Communities (PAIC) will host a World Café style Interfaith Dialogue on Wednesday, January 24, at 7:30 PM at St. Raphael. Watch upcoming bulletins for more details.

A Prayer in Time of War

Lord God,

Remember Christ, your Son, who is peace itself, and who has washed away our hatred with his blood. Because you love all men and women, look with mercy on all who are engaged in battle. Banish the violence and evil within all combatants so that one day, we may all deserve to be called your sons and your daughters. Grant this through Christ our Lord. - Author Unknown

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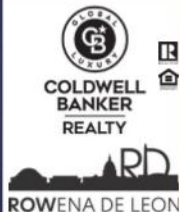
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