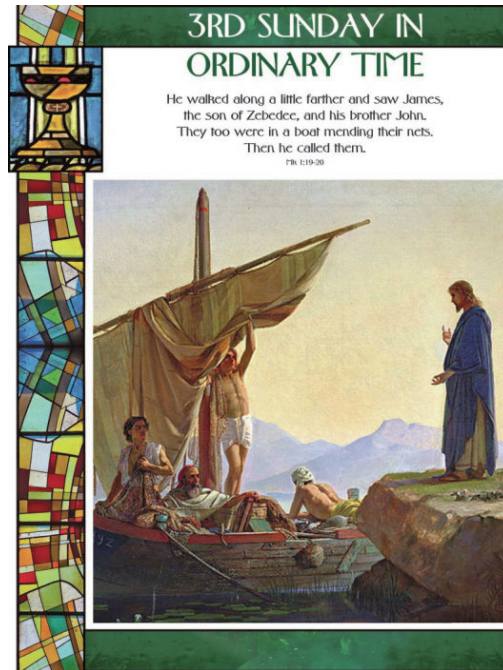


St. Raphael Catholic Church



1513 Dunster Road Rockville, Maryland 20854

January 21, 2024

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 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 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: 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 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.

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

Mass Schedule and Intentions for the Week Third Week in Ordinary Time

Monday, January 22

6:30AM Deacon Frank Salatto
9:00AM Victor Stello (d)

Tuesday, January 23

6:30AM Joanne Hathway Meltzer (d)
9:00AM Sarah Cevallos (d)

Wednesday, January 24

6:30AM Mary Ellen Francis (d)
9:00AM Victoria Aquino (d)

Thursday, January 25

6:30AM James Watson (d)
9:00AM Gary Colgrove (d)

Friday, January 26

6:30AM Wilma & Hugo Dalarcao (d)
9:00AM Gary Welsh (d)

Saturday, January 27

9:00AM Benjamin Koka
5:00PM Fr. Christian Deacon Richard Mattocks (d)

Sunday, January 28

7:00AM Fr. Christian Edwina Kulczynski (d)
8:30AM Fr. Christian Helen Betz (d)
10:00AM Fr. B. Glasgow Members of the Parish
11:30AM Fr. J. Glasgow Robert Tabb (d)
1:00PM Fr. Christian Jorge Duarte (d)
6:00PM Fr. Jean-Marie Inda Oei

The priest schedule is subject to change.

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.

Baptism:

Austin Alexander Koubek—January 6

Blessing of Throats

Saturday, February 3, 9:00 AM Mass and
all Sunday Masses, Saturday and Sunday, February 3-4.

Low Gluten Hosts that are approved by the Catholic Church for the Holy Eucharist are offered at the time of Communion. The Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion offering these Hosts will be standing near the statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary at all the Masses.

The next Coffee and Donuts

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 4

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

Bulletin notices are due in writing ON THURSDAY, THE WEEK BEFORE THE published date. Notices may be emailed to: esalatto@straphaels.org. This bulletin was transmitted January 16.

Please pray for the soul of

Addie Cassano, sister in law of Angie Muratore,
Mrs. Cecile Therese Fecteau,
mother of Reverend Raymond Fecteau
Annagret Trudell, mother of Deacon Tom Trudell
Stewart Walker, husband of Janet Leonard-Walker



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.



FAMILY HOLY HOUR

To celebrate the Year of Eucharistic Revival,
families of all ages are invited to our monthly
holy hour on Friday, February 2!

6:00-7:00pm: Praise and Worship Eucharistic
Adoration/Confessions in the church.

7:00-8:00pm: Fellowship in parish courtyard, hot cider,
cocoa, firepit!

Contact Mike and Annie McHugh for more details at
mmchugh@straphaels.org & amchugh@straphaels.org

"Come after me, and I will
make you fishers of men."



St. Raphael Honor Roll

Please pray for those serving in our armed forces, those wounded in
body and spirit, 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
Captain Julia Timm Intili, USAF
LTJG Jake Klosowski, USN
LT COL Todd Lennon, USAF
Captain Frank Lowery, USN
Commander Mike McNally, USN
Charles McTavish, USA
LCDR Zachary Poindexter, USN
2LT Dan Quackenbush
1LT Will Quackenbush, USA
1LT Benedict Ray, USMC
LT Paul Schauppner, USN
LT James Sheets (USN)
2nd LT Andrew Valentine USMA
LT Kenneth Yale, USAF

Please review and send changes to: e-mail esalatto@straphaels.org

Welcome

Rockville Catholic Summer Program

The Rockville Catholic Summer Program is the area's best
option for summer camp in terms of both quality of
programming and affordability! Registration for the 2024
season of RCSP opens in February! Visit our webpage,
www.rockvillecatholicsummer.com for more information on
how to sign up! New families are encouraged to fill out our
new family form to get on the email list. Contact Mike
McHugh at rockvillecatholicsummer@gmail.com with any
questions.

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>

**All are Welcome to join us in
Parish Library on
Wednesday, January 24, 7:00PM
to hear**

**Andrew Rivas
Manager for Public Policy and Advocacy for
the Archdiocese of Washington**

Mr. Rivas will be discussing the Maryland proposed legislation to make Physician-Assisted Suicide (PAS) legal, as well as the abortion amendment slated to be on the November 2024 election ballot.

**The Respect for Life Committee invites you to
learn more about what we believe as
Catholics regarding Physician Assisted
Suicide and Abortion**

"As Catholic leaders and moral teachers, we believe that life is the most basic gift of a loving God--a gift over which we have stewardship but not absolute dominion. Our tradition, declaring a moral obligation to care for our own life and health and to seek such care from others, recognizes that we are not morally obligated to use all available medical procedures in every set of circumstances. But that tradition clearly and strongly affirms that as a responsible steward of life one must never directly intend to cause one's own death, or the death of an innocent victim, by action or omission. As the Second Vatican Council declared, "euthanasia and willful suicide" are "offenses against life itself" which "poison civilization"; they "debase the perpetrators more than the victims and militate against the honor of the creator" (*Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*, n.27)."

To learn more go to:

<https://www.usccb.org/prolife/assisted-suicide-euthanasia>

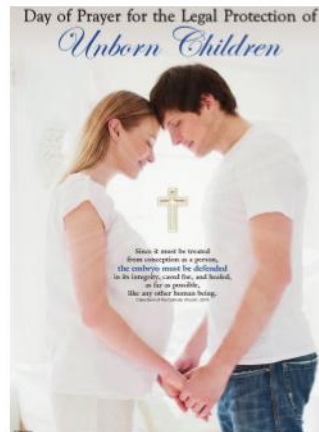
If you are approached by someone in church or parking lot in need of help, please hand them a bulletin. The SVdP intake number is also on bulletin front cover.



**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.



**9 Days for Life Novena
from January 16 - 24**

Like last year, we will be praying the USCCB Novena for Life in the Church at the conclusion of every daily Mass from January 16 -24. For more details on the Novena and to print your own copy, please see the USCCB website.

<https://www.respectlife.org/9-days-for-life>

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.

"Saving Our Families"

Married Couples One Day Retreat - come with the whole family

**Sat., Feb. 10th, 2024
9:00 AM to 4:00 PM**



- Marriage as the Holy Cause
- Rekindling Wonder
- Our House Our Rules
- Growing Kids in Chastity

St. Raphael Domestic Church & Men's Fellowship, and the KOC Mater Dei Council # 9774 invite you to come and spend the day with the Lord and reflect on the life of your marriage and family.

The day will include: Mass, conferences, conversation, prayer and more. Children's Program & Care is provided (by the Youth Ministry). A Simple Lunch will be served. The event is free to all attending; however, a donation would be greatly appreciated.

To register, please use the QR code or follow the link: <https://kofc9774.org/married-couples-retreat/>.

Questions: please call Federico Sologuren, 202-438-5071. Whatever the form of response: please give your names, phone number & email, and number & ages of children attending.



**THE POPE'S INTENTION FOR JANUARY 2024
FOR THE GIFT OF DIVERSITY IN THE CHURCH**

We pray that the Holy Spirit may help us to recognize the gift of different charisms within the Christian community and to discover the richness of different traditions and rituals in the Catholic Church.

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.

Eucharistic Adoration is a treasure of the Church, offered to all. So many believers testify to the power of this tradition! Among them, Catholic author J.R.R. Tolkien (*the Hobbit* and *the Lord of the Rings*) who wrote in a letter to his son:

"Out of the darkness of my life, so much frustrated, I put before you the one great thing to love on earth: the Blessed Sacrament ... There you will find romance, glory, honor, fidelity, and the true way of all your loves on earth, and more than that..."

This is a beautiful invitation to adore our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament here at St. Raphael.

Tuesdays, 6:45PM until benediction 7:45PM
except for First Tuesday of the month
Thursdays, after 9AM Mass until Benediction, 7:15PM
After the Friday 6:30AM Mass until 7:30AM

Since this is a year of the **Eucharistic Revival**, St. Raphael's will be presenting an exhibit on the Eucharistic Miracles designed and created by Blessed Carlo Acutis.

Save the date

For the Exhibit of Eucharistic Miracles
February 24 and 25

"The Eucharist is my highway to heaven."
 Quote from Carlo

Carlo Acutis, was an Italian boy, who developed a deep devotion to the Eucharist. As a teenager he created a website for fun that was a collection of all the documented Eucharistic miracles that he could find. This website introduced the world to these miracles. Carlo died in 2006 at the age of 15 from a sudden death.

Blessed Sacrament Bereavement Support Group

The Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament at 3630 Quesada Street, NW Washington, DC, 20015-2538, will offer an eight-week bereavement support group series for adults who have experienced the death of a parent, spouse, child, sibling or significant other. The next series will begin **Tuesday February 20, and continue for eight consecutive Tuesdays through April 9, 2024 from 7:00-8:30 PM.**

The meetings are virtual. For more information contact Jim Hoffman at hoffmanjpc@gmail.com or call cell: (202) 577 – 2213.

Scripture Readings For the Week of January 21, 2024

Sunday	Third Sunday in Ordinary Time
Jon 3:1-5, 10; Ps 25:4-5, 6-7, 8-9; 1 Cor 7:29-31; Mk 1:14-20	
Monday	Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children
2 Sm 5:1-7, 10; Ps 89:20, 21-22, 25-26; Mk 3:22-30	
Tuesday	Memorial of Saint Vincent, Deacon and Martyr and Saint Marianne Cope, Virgin
2 Sm 6:12b-15, 17-19; Ps 24:7, 8, 9, 10; Mk 3:31-35	
Wednesday	Memorial of Saint Francis de Sales, Bishop and Doctor of the Church
2 Sm 7:4-17; Ps 89:4-5, 27-28, 29-30; Mk 4:1-20	
Thursday	Feast of the Conversion of Saint Paul, Apostle
Acts 22:3-16 or Acts 9:1-22; Ps 117:1bc, 2; Mk 16:15-18	
Friday	Memorial of Saints Timothy and Titus, Bishops
2 Tm 1:1-8 or Ti 1:1-5; Ps 96:1-2a, 2b-3, 7-8a, 10; Mk 4:26-34	
Saturday	Memorial of Saint Angela Merici, Virgin
2 Sm 12:1-7a, 10-17; Ps 51:12-13, 14-15, 16-17; Mk 4:35-41	
Sunday	Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Dt 18:15-20; Ps 95:1-2, 6-7, 7-9; 1 Cor 7:32-35; Mk 1:21-28	

Holy Mass followed by Healing Prayers



February 6, 7:00 PM

Confessions will continue during Mass and Healing Prayers.

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

School News

A peek behind our classroom doors

JANUARY 21, 2024



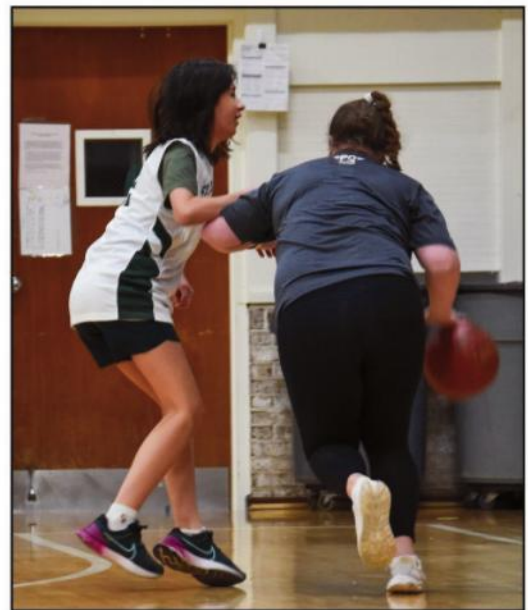
Let's go, Angels!



Spirit Day celebrates our CYO and SRS basketball teams and showcases a matchup between eighth grade and staff. Go, Angels!



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





**NEW Lenten Retreat for Women
Mar 16-17, 2024**

Experience the essentials of the Spiritual Exercises in this abbreviated one-night retreat!

Based on the Spiritual Exercises, the retreat is designed to provide a rejuvenating experience with a more convenient schedule. You will have the opportunity to participate in guided meditations, attend Mass, and benefit from individual spiritual direction. Additionally, you will have plenty of free time to explore the beautiful natural surroundings of the retreat center and spend time in personal reflection. Registration is required. Cost: \$150 per person. Find more information and links to register on the website www.ourladyofbethesda.org. Our Lady of Bethesda Retreat Center, Miracles Happen Here! 7007 Bradley Blvd., Bethesda, MD 20817.

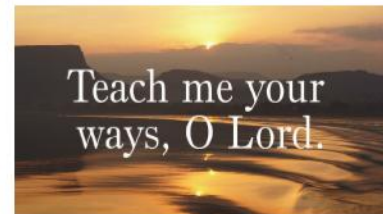
The new year is filled with hope and promise as we seek to grow our vital ministries, explore new ways to share the good news of Christ's love, and reflect His care and mercy to those in need throughout the community. To continue to make a difference in 2024, St. Raphael Catholic Church is reaching out to our parishioners.

Begin the new year with eGiving to help sustain and build ministries throughout 2024 that reflect the steadfast promise of God's love. The need is great in our community, and your generous online gifts will help people all around us.

We prayerfully request that you consider signing up for eGiving from your computer, smartphone or tablet. You can set up a recurring donation or make a one-time gift by visiting faith.direct/MD34 or calling 866-507-8757. Thank you for your continued support of our parish family.

God Bless You,

Father Mike Salah



Having unresolved feelings about your abortion or use of the abortion pill?
You don't feel forgiven? Do feelings of guilt, shame, regret, and sadness return?

Come to an *Entering Canaan*

**DAY OF PRAYER
AND HEALING**

April 13, 2024

8:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. ET

Suggested donation: \$40.00 (financial assistance available)

For more information, contact Project Rachel Ministry
at 301-982-2008 or hope@adw.org



The Roman Catholic
Archdiocese of Washington

Location and participation
are confidential due to
the personal nature of this
experience.



Holiday Inn Washington-College Park

10000 Baltimore Ave, College Park, MD 20740

Join us for a
Worldwide Marriage Encounter Experience on
March 1-3, 2024

at Holiday Inn Washington-College Park
Save the Date for the Follow-Up Renewal on March 17th!

The weekend begins on Friday evening, runs all day Saturday,
and ends with Mass on Sunday afternoon. The couples stay at
the hotel through the weekend

Your marriage deserves that kind of attention!

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

For more information or to apply online,
contact: moments4marriage.org Or wwme.org Or call: 301-
500-0871



Abortion Hurts Men Too

Are you suffering the loss of a child from abortion?

Come to an *Entering Canaan*
**MEN'S DAY OF PRAYER
AND HEALING**

March 16, 2024

9:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. ET

Suggested donation: \$40.00 (financial assistance available)

For more information, contact Project Rachel Ministry
at 301-982-2008 or PRMWashington@adw.org



The Roman Catholic
Archdiocese of Washington



Location and participation are confidential
due to the personal nature of this experience.

Religious Education

Mary Beaudoin, 202-294-7697

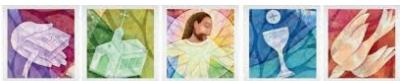
A Prayer for Christian Unity

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity has a history of over 100 years, in which Christians around the world have taken part in an octave of prayer for visible Christian unity. By annually observing the WPCU, Christians move toward the fulfillment of Jesus' prayer at the Last Supper "that they all may be one." (cf. *John 17:21*) *The WPCU begins on January 18 and ends on January 25, the Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul.*

We pray, O gracious Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, that we all may be one as you are one. In your community of complete unity, we have our beginning and our end. To you we pray, asking for the gift of visible unity among all who believe in your Christ.

As we commemorate this Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, we are reminded by your Word that all human beings are our neighbors and that we are to love them like ourselves and in the same way we love you. Help us to overcome the barriers and divisions we have nurtured against your will.

Grant to us, O Lord, a new Spirit of love and solidarity, that we may proclaim your good news to all of creation. We ask this through your Son, Jesus Christ, who with you and the Holy Spirit are one God, for ever and ever. Amen.



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.

Find the SRRE webpage at <https://www.straphaels.org/religious-education>

The SRRE Office coordinates sacrament preparation for all children ages 7-18. This includes Baptism, Confirmation, Reconciliation, and Eucharist. For more information on our faith formation and sacrament preparation programs, please contact Mary Beaudoin.

SRRE Calendar

Find the SRRE Calendar at our webpage:

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

Here are a few highlights:

- Sunday, February 11, classes at 4:30-5:45 PM
- No classes 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 Reconciliation Get-Ready Morning – January 20



Families with children preparing for First Eucharist in April and May are completing the *God's Gift Reconciliation* workbook (younger children) or the first eight chapters of *God's Gift Reconciliation and Eucharist* and worksheets (older children), and memorizing the Prayer of the Penitent (Act of Contrition).

First Penance/Reconciliation will be celebrated on 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 and/or the 7 Themes of Catholic Social Teaching, 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.

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

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



Why Do We Go to Mass

"Alright kids, why do we go to Mass?"

We ask a variation of that question every time we arrive at our parish parking lot, usually sweaty and disheveled from wrangling four (soon to be five) children into the van. A mini call-to-action and reminder of why Mass is important, they respond in chorus as we've taught them:

"To say thank you to God!" (And hopefully to behave well enough for donuts afterward).

The point of Mass is not for our entertainment or time to mingle with friends, but to give our highest worth (literally "worship") to God. Jesus wants to nourish us through both Scripture and the Eucharist, the "Source and Summit" of our faith.

In every Mass Jesus comes to us in the smallest, most humblest of ways, with the ultimate goal of providing us with the nourishment we need for this earthly journey. Bethlehem, where Christ was born as a defenseless baby, means "City of Bread," and the manger, the trough in which he was laid, is where the animals literally fed. From the Manna in the desert through the yearly Passover celebration held by the Jewish people, to the Last Supper of Jesus and His disciples, the Eucharist was foreshadowed all along.

God longs to feed us with Himself—the very Bread of Life!

-Bobby Angel, <https://catholic-link.org/>

Repent and Believe

Today we continue Year B in the cycle of Sunday readings with the Third Sunday in Ordinary Time. Remember to make time to reflect on the [Scripture readings](https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/012124.cfm) with your family: <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/012124.cfm>

Readings: Jonah 3:1–5, 10 (conversion of Nineveh); 1 Corinthians 7:29–31 (encouragement within a hostile world); Mark 1:14–20 (call of the first disciples)

Key Passage: Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news." (Mark 1:14–15)

- ... and then have a family sharing time on the questions below:
- Adults: What part of your life is Jesus calling you to change right now?
 - Kids: In what way do you think you can be a better follower of Jesus?

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 is an excerpt from the synthesis report from that gathering. The report is entitled *A Synodal Church on Mission* and Part 4 is "People in Poverty, Protagonists of the Church's Journey." Below is an excerpt.

Those in poverty ask the Church for love. By love, they mean respect, acceptance and recognition, without which providing food, money or social services represents forms of support that are certainly important but which do not fully take account of the dignity of the person. Each person needs to be enabled to determine their own means of growth rather than be the object of the welfare action of others. Being afforded recognition and respect are powerful ways of enabling this.

The preferential option for the poor is implicit in Christological faith: Jesus, poor and humble, befriended people in poverty, shared a table with them, and denounced the causes of poverty. For the Church, the preferential option for the poor and those at the margins is a theological category before being a cultural, sociological, political or philosophical one. For St. John Paul II, God offers His mercy first to them. This divine preference has consequences for the lives of all Christians, who are called to nourish "the same mind ... as Jesus Christ" (Phil 2:5).

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

Marriage Moments

During the long, usually cold, nights of winter, plan a warm surprise for your beloved. Perhaps you both might independently choose the same surprise. What a surprise that would be!

Parenting Pointers

Here we are in the middle of winter in the Northern Hemisphere. Are you getting tired of it? Find something fun for your family to do together. Play a new game. Draw cartoons of each other. Dress up in costumes. Be silly together. Let your kids lead.

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



Laudate Deum

On October 4, 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." Below is an excerpt.
The ethical goad

29. The ethical decadence of real power is disguised thanks to marketing and false information, useful tools in the hands of those with greater resources to employ them to shape public opinion. With the help of these means, whenever plans are made to undertake a project involving significant changes in the environment

or high levels of contamination, one raises the hopes of the people of that area by speaking of the local progress that it will be able to generate or of the potential for economic growth, employment and human promotion that it would mean for their children. Yet in reality there does not seem to be any true interest in the future of these people, since they are not clearly told that the project will result in the clearing of their lands, a decline in the quality of their lives, a desolate and less habitable landscape lacking in life, the joy of community and hope for the future; in addition to the global damage that eventually compromises many other people as well.

30. One need but think of the momentary excitement raised by the money received in exchange for the deposit of nuclear waste in a certain place. The house that one could have bought with that money has turned into a grave due to the diseases that were then unleashed. And I am not saying this, moved by a overflowing imagination, but on the basis of something we have seen. It could be said that this is an extreme example, but in these cases there is no room for speaking of "lesser" damages, for it is precisely the amassing of damages considered tolerable that has brought us to the situation in which we now find ourselves.

Find the full *Laudate Deum* document online at the Vatican website.



Prayer for Peace

Lord God of peace, hear our prayer!

We have tried so many times and over so many years to resolve our conflicts by our own powers and by the force of our arms. How many moments of hostility and darkness have we experienced; how much blood has been shed; how many lives have been shattered; how many hopes have been buried... But our efforts have been in vain.

Now, Lord, come to our aid! Grant us peace, teach us peace; guide our steps in the way of peace. Open our eyes and our hearts, and give us the courage to say: "Never again war!"; "With war everything is lost". Instill in our hearts the courage to take concrete steps to achieve peace.

Lord, God of Abraham, God of the Prophets, God of Love, you created us and you call us to live as brothers and sisters. Give us the strength daily to be instruments of peace; enable us to see everyone who crosses our path as our brother or sister. Make us sensitive to the plea of our citizens who entreat us to turn our weapons of war into implements of peace, our trepidation into confident trust, and our quarreling into forgiveness.

Keep alive within us the flame of hope, so that with patience and perseverance we may opt for dialogue and reconciliation. In this way may peace triumph at last, and may the words "division", "hatred" and "war" be banished from the heart of every man and woman. Lord, defuse the violence of our tongues and our hands. Renew our hearts and minds, so that the word which always brings us together will be "brother", and our way of life will always be that of: Shalom, Peace, Salaam!

Amen.

<https://www.usccb.org/prayers/pope-francis-prayer-peace>





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