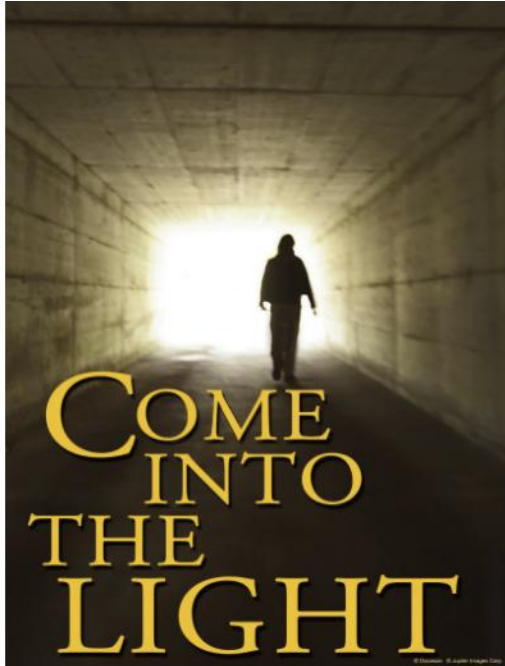


St. Raphael Catholic Church



“...SO THAT
EVERYONE
WHO BELIEVES
IN HIM MAY
HAVE ETERNAL
LIFE.”



1513 Dunster Road Rockville, Maryland 20854

March 10, 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 Lojano, Assistant for Religious Education, ext. 123
Annalee McHugh, Youth Minister, amchugh@straphaels.org
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: 6:30 - 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.

Parish Penance



**Tuesday, March 26
6:30PM**

The Lenten season fills our parish with hope and promise – opportunities abound 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.

With eGiving, you can help sustain and build ministries this year that reflect the 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.

Sign up today by visiting faith.direct/MD34 or calling Customer Service at 866-507-8757.

Thank you for your continued support of our parish family.

God Bless You,
Father Mike

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 usccb.org.

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 March 5.

Mass Schedule and Intentions for the Week Fourth Week of Lent

Monday, March 11

6:30AM Faith Juffre (d)
9:00AM Gary Welsh (d)

Tuesday, March 12

6:30AM Tomasz Jaworski (d)
9:00AM Agamemnon Hanzas (d)

Wednesday, March 13

6:30AM Josephine Williams (d)
9:00AM Robert Stovall (d)

Thursday, March 14

6:30AM Father Christian Huebner
9:00AM Marilyn Renick (d)

Friday, March 15

6:30AM Deacon Frank Salatto
9:00AM Janie Davidson (d)

Saturday, March 16

9:00AM Jorge Otero (d)
5:00PM Fr. Tom Reed Williams (d)

Sunday, March 17

7:00AM	Fr. Christian	Members of the Parish
8:30AM	Fr. Tom	Sadie Sommerville (d)
10:00AM	Fr. Tom	Sister Denette Leifeld
11:30AM	Fr. Mike	Ellen & Jack Shannon (d)
1:00PM	Fr. Christian	Nicolas Molina (d)
6:00PM	Fr. Mike	Kathy Lising

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.

Please pray for the soul of

Most Reverend Francisco González, S.F.
James Zink
Jason Vogel
Julie Beaver
Fr. Robert Crawford
Emma Gonzalez, grandmother of Paco Lubian



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.

Children's Liturgy of the Word Needs You!



Children's Liturgy of the Word is looking for **volunteers** to join our ministry to bring the Good News of the Gospel to our children from 4-10 years at the 10AM Mass in developmentally appropriate language.

We provide training, weekly materials, mentorship and encouragement from experienced CLW ministers.

Time Required: 1-2 hours prep and 1 hour at Mass when it is your team's turn to serve. The prep time will decrease as you become comfortable with the format.

Qualifications: a genuine love of children and a desire to share your faith with our children. We will provide all the instructions and support to navigate the required ADW Child Protection screening.

Benefits: Priceless! Don't be surprised if your own faith grows as you dig a little deeper into the Sunday readings! Make new friends and share your talents with this important parish ministry.

Interested? Come and see us on Sunday at 10AM Mass. Then, please contact Mary Beaudoin (mbeaudoin@straphaels.org) or Cathleen Shannon (cshannon1794@gmail.com).

We look forward to hearing from you!!

JOIN US FOR
chosen

**VOCATIONS RETREAT FOR GIRLS IN
8TH-12TH GRADE**

APRIL 27, 2024, 8:30AM-4:00PM

SAINT MARY OF THE MILLS CATHOLIC CHURCH, LAUREL MD

Join us for talks on
different types of vocations,
adoration, Mass, food,
games, crafts, and more!

**cost:\$20
scholarships
available if needed**

QUESTIONS? CONTACT BSMITH@STMARYOFTHEMILLS.ORG



REGISTER HERE!



<https://form.jotform.com/240143486973159>

April
Planning

Holy Mass
followed by Healing Prayers
Tuesday, April 2
7:00 PM

Confessions at 7:00PM
and will continue during Mass.



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>



The Carlo Acutis Eucharistic Miracles Mini-Mission on February 24 and 25 was very successful and more importantly, inspirational to the hundreds of people who attended from St. Raphael's and other neighboring parishes. Thank you to all the volunteers who came to welcome and guide the visitors. Special thanks to the Knights of Columbus volunteers who set up and took down the exhibit in record time! To learn more about Blessed Carlo Acutis and Eucharistic Miracles, please refer to the following book:

The Eucharistic Miracles of the World
By the Real Presence Eucharistic Education and Adoration Assoc. Inc.

www.therealpresence.org
and the website offering downloadable versions of the posters of the exhibit:
http://www.miracolieucaristici.org/en/Liste/pref_RC.html

WAY OF THE CROSS IN WASHINGTON, DC

On Good Friday, March 29, 2024, 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.

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.

Scripture Readings for the Week of March 10, 2024

Sunday	Fourth Sunday of Lent
2 Chr 36:14-16, 19-23; Ps 137:1-2, 3, 4-5, 6; Eph 2:4-10; Jn 3:14-21	
Monday	
Is 65:17-21; Ps 30:2 and 4, 5-6, 11-12a and 13b; Jn 4:43-54	
Tuesday	Ez 47:1-9, 12; Ps 46:2-3, 5-6, 8-9; Jn 5:1-16
Wednesday	Is 49:8-15; Ps 145:8-9, 13cd-14, 17-18; Jn 5:17-30
Thursday	Ex 32:7-14; Ps 106:19-20, 21-22, 23; Jn 5:31-47
Friday	
Wis 2:1a, 12-22; Ps 34:17-18, 19-20, 21 and 23; Jn 7:1-2, 10, 25-30	
Saturday	Jer 11:18-20; Ps 7:2-3, 9bc-10, 11-12; Jn 7:40-53
Sunday	Fifth Sunday of Lent
Jer 31:31-34; Ps 51:3-4, 12-13, 14-15; Heb 5:7-9; Jn 12:20-33	

The next **Grieving Parent Spiritual Support Group Gathering** will be held **virtually on Tuesday, March 12 at 7:00PM**. Any parent who is grieving the loss of a child is welcome to attend and to be supported by those that know your pain. You will not be asked to share your story. There is no cost to attend. For more information, contact Maria Warner at mew.del@verizon.net or the Office of Family Life at flm@adw.org or 301-853-4546. Link to a simple registration to receive the Zoom link: <https://forms.office.com/r/IETGd0t8ME>

High School Youth

Theology of the Body Series – 1/16 – 4/19

All high school teens are invited for a Going Deeper series on St. John Paul II's Theology of the Body. This 12-week program will meet each Tuesday evening, 7:30-8:45PM and explore the meaning of the body, chastity, sexuality, dating, marriage and more. Please contact Annie McHugh at amchugh@straphaels.org to sign up! Cost is \$15.00.

6:00PM Youth Mass Music Director

As St. Raphael's continues its search for a new music director for the 6pm Youth Mass, we are striving to preserve the spirit of this Liturgy as well as the involvement of our parish youth.

For more information on programs, or to be added to a youth ministry listserve, please contact Mike McHugh at mmchugh@straphaels.org

THE POPE'S INTENTION FOR MARCH 2024 FOR THE NEW MARTYRS

We pray that those who risk their lives for the Gospel in various parts of the world inflame the Church with their courage and missionary enthusiasm.

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.

Queen of Heaven - Mary's Battle for You

Tuesday Mornings 10:00 -12:00 Noon in PARISH LIBRARY
April 2 – May 21, 2024

Tuesday Mornings 10:30 – 12:00 Noon on ZOOM April 2 –
May 21, 2024

May is Mary's month and accordingly, we will host an 8-week study of Mary, who lives on as Mother of the Church. In a battle between the Angel who said No, and the woman who said Yes you will see your mother intervening at pivotal periods in history to draw us back to her Son, including at her most well-known apparitions. Queen of Heaven was filmed on location around the world. Learn what it means to have Mary as your mother and the many ways you can nurture your relationship with her.

contact Dorothy Welsh dwwelsh5@aol.com or Jackie Murphy jackiefmurphy@comcast.net.
Workbooks are available from Jackie for \$33.

Evening Bible study

Wisdom: God's Vision for Life

Seek Wisdom and Increase Your Sense of Peace

Thursday evenings

4 April 2024 - 23 May 2024 via Zoom

wisdom journal and online video access can be purchased here.

<https://ascensionpress.com/collections/wisdom#study-material>

Contact Terry Salsgiver
tsalsgiver@comcast.net
301-437-2018

Ushers Ministry



We need your help! The Usher Ministry needs volunteers for all weekend Masses. This is an ideal ministry for families to serve together. Please contact Terry Salsgiver at 301-437-2018 or tsalsgiver@comcast.net.

The Bethesda 40 Days for Life campaign this Lent outside the Wildwood late-term abortion facility is back on.

Our parish will support the Spring Bethesda 40 Days for Life campaign again this year, by praying the rosary on the public sidewalk in front of the abortion facility at the Wildwood Medical Center, 10401 Old Georgetown Road, in Bethesda, **each Saturday during Lent from Saturday, February 17, through Saturday March 30, from 10 AM-4 PM.**

Please do not go alone, but bring a friend with you. Please meet in the vestibule after the 9 AM Mass on Saturdays if you have questions or need directions. ***What could be more important than protecting the lives of innocent babies and their mothers from the devastating effects of abortion?***

Arimathean Volunteers Needed!

Are you available during the day to assist as an Arimathean at a Mass of Christian Burial? Most funerals are on a weekday, about a two-hour commitment.

Arimatheans assist the priest as sacristans, Extraordinary Ministers of the Holy Communion, and altar servers.

The name of the ministry comes from Joseph of Arimathea, who appears in all four of the Gospels.

When it was already evening, since it was the day of preparation, the day before the Sabbath, Joseph of Arimathea, a distinguished member of the council, who was himself awaiting the Kingdom of God, came and courageously went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Pilate was amazed that he was already dead. He summoned the centurion and asked him if Jesus had already died. And when he learned of it from the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph. Having brought a linen cloth, he took him down, wrapped him in the linen cloth and laid him in a tomb that had been hewn out of rock. Then he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb. Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of Jesus, watched where he laid. Mark 15, 42-47.

With each funeral Mass, Arimatheans strive to comfort a grieving family in the example of their namesake, who must have comforted Mary with his care of the body of Jesus.

If you are interested in serving as an Arimathean, please call Terry Sullivan at 301-257-2999.

We are thrilled to welcome you to the upcoming **National Eucharistic Pilgrimage**, which will travel through the **Archdiocese of Washington** from June 7 – June 9, 2024.

On Saturday, **June 8, 2024**, the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage will have a public Mass and Procession in D.C. **All are welcome!**

The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington will also have a stationary pilgrimage for those with limited mobility, or other disability, at the Saint John Paul II National Shrine at the same time as the walking Procession.

SCHEDULE FOR JUNE 8, 2024

8:00AM: Mass at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception.

9:00AM: Eucharistic Procession through the Brookland neighborhood of D.C., stopping at The Catholic University of America (CUA), various religious communities, The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) building, and ending at the St. John Paul II National Shrine.

12:00 noon: Benediction at the Saint John Paul II National Shrine.

12:30PM: Catechesis on the Eucharist led by Archdiocese of Washington Auxiliary Bishop Evelio Menjivar and a young person from the Archdiocese of Washington.

There will be time at the Saint John Paul II National Shrine for rest and refreshments.

To register go to:

[National Eucharistic Pilgrimage Registration - Archdiocese of Washington \(adw.org\)](https://www.adw.org/national-eucharistic-pilgrimage-registration)

School News



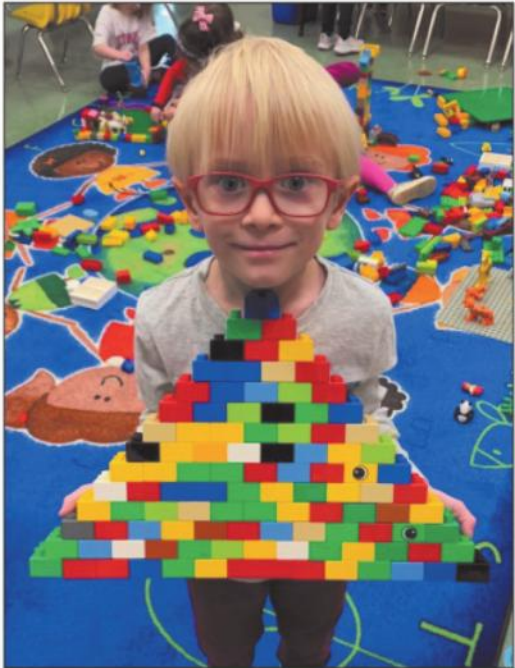
A peek behind our classroom doors

March 10, 2024



Learning Through Play

At SRNS, we offer a play-based learning environment. Our students thrive while having fun!! After all, learning IS fun!!



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



Save the Date: Apr. 24

Retail therapy, anyone? Save the date for our annual Girls' Night Out: April 24th! We are searching for vendors. We welcome a variety of vendors, so if you or someone you know is interested, contact Laura Long, hsapresident@straphaels.org

Sponsor your parish school...
and your parish school will celebrate YOU!



Support St. Raphael School at major events year round—Golf Classic, Angels on the Run, Spring Soiree, drama production, Girls' Night Out—and enjoy benefits ranging from admission tickets to a customized banner displayed in the Trumpet Room for the entire 2024-25 school year.

★ EARLY SIGNING BONUS FOR NEW SPONSORS ★

Secure your 2024-25 Wings Multi-Event Sponsorship by **April 22nd**, and receive an SRS Yeti tumbler. Details at www.straphaelschoolmd.org.

ONE SPONSORSHIP • FIVE FLAGSHIP EVENTS • INFINITE REWARDS



Get Your Tickets!

Our 2024 Spring Musical will debut on Friday, March 22nd at 7 p.m. with an encore performance on March 23rd at 2 p.m. Tickets are on sale now.

Visit www.straphaelschoolmd.org for more information and to purchase tickets.

LENT

**Stations of the Cross, Fridays in Lent –
after 9:00 AM Mass (Mary's Way)
6:30PM and 7:15PM in Spanish
Confessions every Tuesday in Lent at 6:30PM**

HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

**Parish
Penance**



**Tuesday, March 26
6:30PM**

- ☐ **Holy Thursday, March 28**
Morning Prayer, 9:00AM, Church
7:30PM, Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper, bilingual
followed by Adoration in the Church
- ☐ **Good Friday, March 29**
Morning Prayer 9:00AM, Church
Confessions: after morning prayer, 9:30-10:30AM and 3:00-4:00PM
Stations of the Cross
12:00PM in Spanish, 3:00PM in English
4:00PM, Passion of Our Lord in Spanish in Church
7:30PM, Passion of Our Lord, English in Church
- ☐ **Holy Saturday, March 30**
Morning Prayer, 9:00 AM, Church
Confessions – after morning prayer, 9:30-10:30AM and 3:45-4:45PM
- ☐ **Easter Vigil, Holy Saturday, March 30, 7:30 PM**
- ☐ **Easter Sunday Masses – March 31**
7:00 AM
8:30 AM
10:00AM Church only
11:30AM Church only
1:00 PM Spanish Mass
No 6:00PM Mass on Easter Sunday



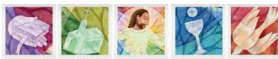
Religious Education

Mary Beaudoin, 202-294-7697

CRS Rice Bowl – Journey with Us this Lent

Each Lent, Catholic families across the country unite to put their faith into action through prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Through CRS Rice Bowl, families learn about how our sisters and brothers across the globe overcome hardships like hunger and climate change, and how through Lenten alms, we have the power to make the world a better place for all.

CRS Rice Bowl shares [stories of hope](#) from CRS' work around the world. These stories are examples of how your Lenten alms are helping communities find solutions to problems like hunger and climate change. Take a virtual journey with us to Uganda, El Salvador and Indonesia! Don't forget to try the [meatless recipes](#) each Friday during Lent. Find stories of hope, reflections, recipes, and resources for families and individuals at: csrricebowl.org



Religious Education Classes

St. Raphael Religious Education (SRRE) offers ongoing faith formation for all children and teens, as well as preparation for sacraments. See our webpage at <https://www.straphaels.org/religious-education>

SRRE Calendar

Find the SRRE Calendar at our webpage: Note these highlights:

- Spring Break during Holy Week and Easter Week, March 24-25, and March 31-April 1
- End-of-the-Year Social on May 13
- Registration for 2024-2025 opens in June.

Prayer Ministry

Please pray for the adults and children in our parish who are preparing for sacraments at the Easter Vigil and during the Easter season. Pray also for their parents or family members and their catechists.

Almighty God, bless our brothers and sisters who are asking for baptism. Grant them light and strength to profess the faith of the Church and to follow Christ with resolute hearts. Give them new life in your Holy Spirit.

Lord, send your Spirit to touch the hearts of our Confirmation candidates that they may believe in you and in Jesus whom you sent. Stir up in them an ardent desire for the gifts of wisdom, understanding, right judgment, courage, knowledge, reverence, and wonder and awe in your presence. Open their hearts to your Spirit and bring to fulfillment the good work you have begun in them.

Loving God, strengthen the faith of all those who are preparing for First Communion. Ground their hope in the true presence of Christ. Help them to recognize in the Body and Blood of Christ your boundless love for us. Through this sacrament, nurture in them a Christ-like love for all people.



First Eucharist

Parents who missed the First Eucharist Parent Meeting on February 21 should contact the SRRE office for the recording and slides.

Our First Eucharist Get-Ready Morning will be on Saturday, March 16, at 9:30-11:30 in the Trumpet Room.

This week, families with children preparing for First Eucharist in April and May are completing chapter 4 in *God's Gift Eucharist* workbook (younger children) or chapter 11 of *God's Gift Reconciliation and Eucharist* and worksheets (older children). Completed workbooks and worksheets are due at First Communion rehearsal.

- First Eucharist will be celebrated on Saturdays, April 27 and May 4

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.

Confirmation Interviews have begun and will continue through March 11.

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

Letters to Bishop Menjivar are due in the SRRE office on March 15.

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

Through the Eyes of Faith

Today we continue Year B in the cycle of Sunday readings with the Fourth Sunday of Lent. Remember to make time to reflect on the [Scripture readings](#) with your family: <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/031024-YearB.cfm>

Readings: 2 Chronicles 36:14-17, 19-23 (dissolution of Judah); Ephesians 2:4-10 (generosity of God's plan); John 3:14-21 (Jesus' teaching to Nicodemus)

Key Passage: Jesus said to Nicodemus, "Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him." (John 3:17)

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

- Adults: Do you see the world as basically evil, or as good? What difference does this make in the way you live?
- Kids: Where do you see goodness in God's world?

Synod on Synodality

In October 2023, 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, *A Synodal Church on Mission*, Part 5, The Church, out of every tribe, tongue, people, and nation.

c) Churches live in increasingly multicultural and multireligious contexts. This necessitates finding ways to create dialogue between religions and cultures, with which Christians should engage alongside the many groups that compose a society. Living the Church's mission in these contexts requires a style of presence, service and proclamation that seeks to build bridges, cultivate mutual understanding and engage in evangelisation that accompanies, listens and learns. In the Assembly the image of "taking off one's shoes" to cross the threshold towards encounter with the other resonated as a sign of humility and respect for a sacred space, on an equal footing.

d) Migration reshapes local churches as cross-cultural communities. Migrants and refugees, many of whom bear the wounds of uprooting, war and violence, often become a source of renewal and enrichment for the communities that welcome them and an opportunity to establish direct links with geographically distant churches. In the face of increasingly hostile attitudes toward migrants, we are called to practice an open welcome, to accompany them in the construction of a new life and to build a true intercultural communion among peoples. Respect for the liturgical traditions and religious practices of migrants is an integral part of an authentic welcome.

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

Marriage Moments

Disagreements, Part 2. If on a scale of 1-10 you're both about 5, seek a compromise. If you're both around 10, seek a new solution or agree to disagree. Don't play games though. If one of you is always a 10, he/she may need to let go of control..

Parenting Pointers

On these often dreary days of March, carve out some time this week to play with your child(ren). Think board games, cards, hide & seek, read a book together, or some other fun activity. Even a video game counts. The rest of the day may go better.

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



Laudate Deum

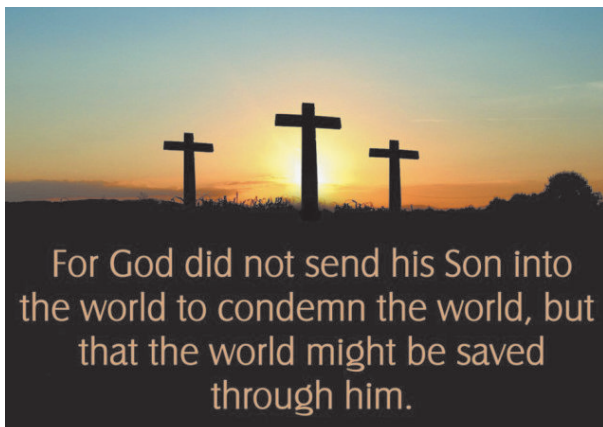
On October 4, the feast of Saint Francis of Assisi, Pope Francis released a new apostolic exhortation on the climate crisis. *Laudate Deum* is addressed to "all people of good will." Below is an excerpt from section 6: *Spiritual Motivations*.

Journeying in communion and commitment

69. I ask everyone to accompany this pilgrimage of reconciliation with the world that is our home and to help make it more beautiful, because that commitment has to do with our personal dignity and highest values. At the same time, I cannot deny that it is necessary to be honest and recognize that the most effective solutions will not come from individual efforts alone, but above all from major political decisions on the national and international level.

70. Nonetheless, every little bit helps, and avoiding an increase of a tenth of a degree in the global temperature would already suffice to alleviate some suffering for many people. Yet what is important is something less quantitative: the need to realize that there are no lasting changes without cultural changes, without a maturing of lifestyles and convictions within societies, and there are no cultural changes without personal changes.

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



For God did not send his Son into
the world to condemn the world, but
that the world might be saved
through him.

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>

The Ten Commandments and God's Love for Us

In his small book *The Ten Commandments*, Msgr. Charles Pope invites us see God's Law as part of a relationship of love and trust.

God commands us and sets limits for us not because He is out to make life difficult or to take away our fun. God commands because he loves us and does not want us to be trapped in the painful realities of sin and evil. Through the grace He gives us Jesus enables us to trust the Father and to love Him. Love does not treat the law as an imposition but as a gift.¹

Over the next few weeks, we will look at the Ten Commandments and reflect on how each commandment is a call to a deeper relationship with God and greater love of God and neighbor.

The First Commandment: I am the Lord your God. You shall not have strange gods before me.

In the first commandment, God seeks to preserve His people from such bewilderment and sorrow. He alone is the Creator Lord who made all things. We can and must trust him in all things because he is able. He gives us the one and only truth by which we may be saved. Since He alone is all-powerful, we need not worry of the anger or power of other gods . . . God therefore speaks to us in love and commands us to worship Him alone, to trust him in all things, and to serve him with obedience.²

¹Copyright ©2014, TAN Books; Introduction, viii

²Ibid., pp. 2-3





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