



The Parish Press

Newsletter of Saint Raphael Parish Family

Milford, Connecticut

September 2026



Taste Tempting Menu

Hot Dogs
Hamburgers
Veggie Burgers
Sausage Patties
Grilled Boneless Chicken
Roasted Veggies
Potato Salad
Fresh Fruit Salad
Garden Salad
Fried Dough
Watermelon
Cookies

**Parish Family Picnic: Sunday, September 13th.
Saint Ann Church Grounds, 12 Noon-3:00 p.m.
Catered by Lasse's! Don't Miss It!!**

School's in session, the college football season is underway, we're in the last days of summer - it must be parish picnic time!

Come picnicking at the Saint Ann Church grounds, noon-3:00 p.m., on Sunday, September 13th. Rub elbows, swap stories and share laughter with those great folks, the members of the Saint Raphael Parish family. We'll have a DJ, an inflatable bounce house, corn hole, hula hoops and an array of temporary tattoos.

Look for Father Labarda of the beaming smile and thank him for the parish's generous support of the picnic. (If you are so inclined, free will offerings will be gratefully accepted.)

Two important notes: *Respond early to let us know you're coming: # of adults, of kids ages 5-13 and of little ones under 5. (Lasse's needs a head count.) Email us (srppicnic@gmail.com) or drop the completed tear-off from the bulletin into the collection basket. Want to be part of the crew? Let Cathy know (cathy.code@att.net) and make her smile.

*For safety and setup reasons, there will be no parking in the area behind Saint Ann Church on Saturday and Sunday, September 12th and 13th. The usual on-street parking and the lot across Church Street will be available. Thanks very much. (Hot dog for me, please, fruit salad and cold watermelon. Delightful!)



News from the Knights, Submitted by Richard Wheeling

I hope you have all been enjoying the summer. Tinto Council #47 took a month off from meetings, but we've not been totally dormant. We recruited a new member, Justin Kristi, who attended his first meeting on August 13th. We were pleased to welcome him to our council. And we extend a warm welcome to our pastor, Fr. Nathaniel Labarda, who is already a member of The Father Breen Assembly #1605, the Fourth Degree and Patriotic degree of Saint Raphael Parish. New and returning officers met in late July with newly elected Grand Knight David Sell to begin planning for the current Fraternal Year which started on July 1st.

"In the One, We Are One" was the theme for the 144th Supreme Convention held in Denver Colorado in early August. In his message to the Convention, Pope Leo XIV reflected on the importance of promoting the virtues of unity and charity, encouraging all Knights to "continue bearing witness to that concord which Jesus so ardently desires in your families, your parishes and in the wider communities where you live and serve." Noting that "works of charity...can often be a way to promote unity," the Holy Father also expressed his "deep gratitude for your Order's continued generosity to the less fortunate" and his trust that "your endeavors will continue to bear fruit for many years to come."

Finally, as always, I encourage the men of the parish to think about and pray about joining our council. As a Knight you can make a difference in your life, in your families, in the parish and in the community by living the life that Christ encourages us to live. May our Lord continue to bless you and your families.



Choir To Open a First Sunday Season at Saint Gabriel's

Our very talented and highly regarded choir has planned an exciting First Sunday of the Month series that will open this fall at Saint Gabriel Church.

On October 4th and on the first Sunday of each succeeding month through May, the choir will bring the beautiful sound of its music to the 11 o'clock Mass at Saint Gabriel's.

Thank you, members of the choir, for sharing your special gift with more parishioners.

Coffee And September 19th and 20th

Share tasty treats and refreshing drinks when you gather with the members of the parish family at *Coffee And* after all the Masses on September 19th and 20th.



If you prefer the Saturday Vigil Mass or enjoy the mid-morning Sunday liturgy, stop in to the Saint Ann Parish Center. Prefer to attend Sunday Mass in our stately church along the shore? Enjoy coffee and conversation at Saint Gabriel's Hall.

Celebrate Saint Raphael on September 29th! Feast Day Mass, 8:00 a.m. at Saint Gabriel Church

Continue our long-standing tradition of honoring Saint Raphael, our patron, on Tuesday, September 29th. Join us if you can at Saint Gabriel Church for the 8:00 a.m. Mass of the Archangels, which honors Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael, the only three archangels named in Scripture. They are God's special messengers, each with a different mission: Michael protects; Gabriel announces; Raphael guides and heals (The image at right is a Renaissance style statue of Raphael. Wearing the garb of a Roman soldier he's holding the magical fish from the Old Testament Book of Tobit, Chapters 5-12.)



After Mass, members of the Prayer and Worship Committee will distribute "breakfast to go" bags, tasty treats for your morning enjoyment.

Saint Raphael, guide of travelers, pray for us.

Saint Raphael, health of the sick, pray for us.



**Donna's Creation Care Corner:
The Season of Creation Begins September 1st**

September 1st, the Feast Day of Creation, marks the beginning of the Season of Creation which ends on the Feast of Saint Francis of Assisi, October 4th. This year's theme, Living Water, was inspired by the passage from the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel, that appears at right.

In the verses leading up to the passage, Ezekiel had seen water trickling out from under the threshold of the temple. The trickle has now become a river that "empties into the polluted waters of the sea to freshen them." The words are hopeful, but deliberately astonishing. The sea is the Dead Sea, the world's deepest hypersaline lake. In nature, it would be the salt water that pollutes the fresh water.

The prophet is not, however, describing a natural process; he is announcing "a divine reversal." Divine life revitalizes the one body of water that is most devoid of life. The trees that bear fruit every month are also outside the order of nature. Like the freshening of the Dead Sea, this image is intentionally astounding. Both symbolize the life-giving essence of God the Creator.

Ezekiel's vision stands in sharp contrast to the reality of today's water crisis. According to the United Nations, 1.7 billion people lack basic hygiene services at home, and 2.1 billion people - 1 in 4 people on the globe! - still lack access to clean drinking water. The water crisis disproportionately affects vulnerable communities, future generations, and nonhuman life that has no voice in politics or the economy.

Despite these dire statistics, we can transform Ezekiel's ancient vision into a modern-day reality. To do so we must allow God's living water to flow into us, so that we become more sensitive to the needs of others and more compassionate. Let the flow of that water wash away any stagnant pools of indifference about environmental issues we might be harboring. Then, like the fruit-laden trees along the river banks, we can offer both sustenance and healing to God's creation as well as to all of God's creatures - especially our brothers and sisters who are in need of water. (Read below how your support of a 5K can make a life-changing difference to the people of Rwimi, Uganda.)

In his 2025 message for the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation Pope Leo wrote, "Environmental justice - implicitly proclaimed by the prophets - can no longer be regarded as an abstract concept or a distant goal. It is an urgent need that involves much more than simply protecting the environment. For it is a matter of justice - social, economic, and human. For believers it is also a duty born of faith, since the universe reflects the face of Jesus Christ, in whom all things were created and redeemed."

I saw along the bank of the river a great many trees on each side. "The river empties into the polluted waters of the sea to freshen them. Wherever it flows, the river teems with every kind of living creature; fish will abound. Where these waters flow they refresh; everything lives where the river goes.

Along each bank of the river every kind of fruit tree will grow; their leaves will not wither; nor will their fruit fail. Every month they will bear fresh fruit because the waters of the river flow out from the sanctuary. Their fruit is used for food, and their leaves for healing."

Ezekiel 47:7b-12

**Walnut Beach Pavilion
85 Viscount Drive, Milford
5K Events**

5K Run or Walk, computer timed

Walk Only 1 mile (approx.)

Set your own pace, from stroll to power walk, and enjoy the beauty of the beaches!

Kids Fun Run (1/10 mile)

Free (ages 12 and under only)

Register/Donate Online:

runsignup.com/Race/CT/Milford/RunningWaterForAfrica5K

**Running Water for Africa 5K
Saturday, October 3rd, Walnut Beach Pavilion**

As part of its mission to assist Uganda's rural poor by providing clean, running water, Uganda Farmers Inc., a tax exempt, 501(c)3 non-profit organization, invites you to the 15th edition of the Running Water for Africa 5K on October 3rd. Check out the event details at left and sign up if you can to participate and/or to sponsor this fun and fund-raising event.

This year's project in Rwimi, in keeping with the organization's mission, will provide clean running water *within villages that otherwise have no clean water supply.*

The 2,000 boys and girls at Rwimi's secondary school have long depended on a dangerous stream for their water needs. Several students and locals have died as they stooped to fetch the stream's water, used for drinking, bathing and cooking. Because animals also use the stream as their water, the villagers have to boil the water before they can use it. By drilling new wells *and* constructing reliable water delivery systems, the Uganda Farms Inc. team is making a life-saving difference in Rwimi.



**An Invitation to the Area's Finest Vendors:
Be a Part of the Saint Raphael Parish 2026 Christmas Fair!**

**Saturday, December 5th, 2026
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Saint Ann Parish Center
501 Naugatuck Avenue, Milford**

An 8' x 6' spot is \$55.00 at this popular annual event that is a fun, friendly and family oriented activity that features raffles, Santa, bakery items and Christmas joy. Email Maureen at mhanson808@gmail.com to book your spot, guaranteed once we receive your payment and a completed contract.

GIFT Sacramental Program Required Overview Meetings

First Reconciliation/ First Communion

For parents/guardians of children in Grade 2 or older preparing to receive these sacraments in 2026-2027.

Tuesday, September 8th
6:30-7:30 p.m.

or

Saturday, September 12th
10:00-11:00 a.m.

Parish Center Classroom.

Note: Children are not required to attend, but for those who need child care, a GIFT catechist will supervise an activity for children.

GIFT questions?? Contact Maria : atomasetti@snet.net or 203-988-8598 (cell,voice/text.

GIFT (Growing In Faith Together) Parish Faith Formation for People of All Ages Theme for 2026-2027: Living the Moral Life

Session topic for September is *Love of God and Neighbor*, an opportunity to explore what Jesus calls the Greatest Commandment: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. The second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. The whole law and the prophets depend on these two commandments." (Matthew 22:37-40).

Monthly GIFT sessions begin with a pizza dinner in the Saint Ann Parish Center Hall (501 Naugatuck Ave.), followed by an opening prayer and song, short topic overview, and an all ages opening activity. We then break into age-appropriate learning groups, meeting in Parish Center classrooms.

GIFT for September *Love of God and Neighbor: The Greatest Commandment*

Sunday, September 20th
12 noon-2:15 p.m.

or

Tuesday, September 22nd
6:00-8:15 p.m.

An introduction to the Ten Commandments then a focus on the first, second the third, engaging participants as they discover how to love God by living those commandments in our lives, our homes, and our world.

GIFT Sacramental Program Overview Meetings: Confirmation

Meetings are required for incoming (1st Year) teen candidates in Grade 8 or older who are preparing to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation in the fall of 2027 at the Cathedral of Saint Joseph in Hartford. At least one parent/guardian is required to attend.

Tuesday, September 15th
6:30-8:00 p.m.

or

Thursday, September 17th
6:30-8:00 p.m.



Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA) Formation Program for Adults Begins This Month

Are you or is someone you know interested in becoming Catholic? Are you an adult Catholic who has never received the Sacraments of Eucharist (Holy Communion) and Confirmation?

If this is the right time for you to take the next step on your faith journey, or if you have questions about the OCIA program, please reach out to Maria Tomasetti, as above, **by September 14, 2026**.

OCIA (Order of Christian Initiation of Adults) was formerly called RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults). It is the process through which people join the Catholic Church or complete their initiation into the Catholic Church. Adults who are part of the OCIA program are invited to participate in the life of prayer, worship, and personal conversion that characterizes the life of a Catholic Christian. They will also participate in a series of classes to explore and learn more about the teachings and practices of the Catholic Church.

"Is the OCIA for me?" you may be asking. The program is designed for:

* Those who are not baptized

* Those who were baptized into another Christian denomination and wish to enter into full communion with the Catholic Church

* Baptized Catholics who were never formed in the Catholic faith and have not completed their initiation (have not received the sacraments of Eucharist and Confirmation)

We may also offer an adapted version of the OCIA program for teens who have not been baptized and want to receive the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist.

THE CHOSEN

See the first Episode of *The Chosen*, Season 6 before its official November 15th release date. The depiction of Good Friday is "unlike any thing you've seen before." One reviewer wrote, "I watched Season 6 episode 1... wow, just wow."

Season 6 covers one day, the 24 hours of Good Friday, the final hours of Jesus' life: Gethsemane - the Arrest - the night everything changes.

Season 6, Episode 1 will be screened in the Theater Room at Saint Ann School on a date to be announced. Watch the bulletin and the newsletter for the date of its "release." You won't want to miss it.

Chili Cookoff Update

Eleven chili-meisters (correction on the spelling!) will be vying for the title at our highly anticipated Chili Cookoff on Saturday, October 24th. Good luck to the contenders: the team of Mike & Donna DiMassa, Lucille Ferrer, Louis Giancola, Dominick Grimaldi, Vicky Johnson, MaryAnn Joseph, Alaina Sciuto, Kerry Sciuto, Dcn. George Sartor and Richard Warren. Come sample and vote!



What's New in September??

G.I.F.T sessions and sacramental programs resume. The fun and festive Parish Family Picnic is happening. The Season of Creation begins. The choir is planning a First Sunday season at Saint Gabriel's. Tuesday Rosary recitation returns. On September 29th we will Celebrate Saint Raphael. Check inside for details of these stories and more.

In a remarkable bit of irony, on Patriot Day, September 11th, we honor, remember and pray for all those who died in the terrorist attacks of 2001, while September 21st is recognized as the International Day of Peace.

During September, dedicated to Our Lady of Sorrows, we humbly pray:

Our Lady of Sorrows, bring our prayers for peace in our troubled world before the throne of your Son. Our Lady of Sorrows, pray for us.

The Parish Press

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In Memoriam

Saint Raphael's mourns the recent loss of . .

Steven Fisher Joseph Doherty

Marsha Ziebell Patricia Damon

Roy Sebas Robert Libretti

Therese Cecile Card

Patrick Laconte

Ferdinando Paladino

May they rest with God forever.

Love and Best Wishes . . .

as you begin your married lives together . . .

Thomas and Chenzi (Zhou) Arciuolo

Matthew and Christine (Radwill) Muller



Tom and Chenzi were married on Sunday, July 26th at Saint Ann Church. Matt and Christine were united in marriage on Saturday, August 22nd, also at Saint Ann's. Congratulations to the newlyweds! May God bless you and love sustain you through long and happy marriages.

Pray the Rosary During September

Tuesday Noon Rosary Recitation Resumes

September 8th, the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Join us in the Saint Ann Children's Chapel.

Pray the Rosary with the Knights of Columbus

Thursday, September 24th, 7:00 p.m.
Saint Ann Parish Center

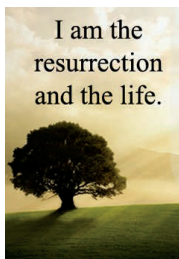
On October's Calendar:

International Rosary

Tuesday, October 6th

7:00 p.m. at Saint Gabriel Church

Refreshments to follow in Saint Gabriel Hall



Bereavement Support: Sunday, September 13th



The parish Bereavement Support group will meet on Sunday afternoon, September 13th at 2 o'clock in the Saint Ann Children's Chapel. Through this very special ministry we offer comfort to those who mourn as they make the difficult journey from grief to healing.

If you are grieving the loss of someone you love we hope you can be with us. Gathered with others who have known the pain of heartache, ease your burden, if only for an hour. Please call Joanne (203-877-4020) for additional information.

October Parish Press Info Due September 14th

Please submit your information for the newsletter's October issue by Monday, September 14th. Send your news, notes, comments and photos to parishpress06460@gmail.com or call Ann Eden (203-874-8744). Thanks very much.

Saint Raphael Parish Website

<https://saintraphaelmilford.org>