

September 2017

Saint Raphael



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Virtual Pilgrimage to Lourdes Comes to St. Raphael on Monday, Oct. 2 “A Unique School of Prayer”

Speaking to gathered pilgrims in Rome recently, Pope Francis told them, “A Pilgrimage to shrines like Lourdes is the most eloquent expression of the faith of God’s people. Each and every pilgrim brings a special wish in their hearts – a prayer.”

More than 6 million people visit the Grotto at the Shrine in Lourdes each year. One person who has had the privilege of making that pilgrimage many times is Frances (Fran) Salaun, OFS, and she will be our leader during the Lourdes Virtual Pilgrimage Experience here at St. Raphael.

Fran serves as Vice President and Virtual Pilgrimage Director and Guide for an organization known as Our Lady of Lourdes Hospitality North American Volunteers with offices in Syracuse, N.Y. Several times each year, Fran, her colleagues, teams of volunteers – including an occasional member of St. Raphael parish – bring the seriously ill and disabled to the Shrine of Lourdes, France. To bring the Lourdes experience closer to all people, however, the North American Volunteers conduct Lourdes Virtual Pilgrimage Experiences for persons “seeking the essence of a visit to Lourdes” without leaving home.

What is a Virtual Pilgrimage? The Lourdes Virtual Pilgrimage Experience is a guided spiritual journey offering the experience of Lourdes through a local interactive “pilgrimage” event. It places pilgrims in the important places associated with the life of Bernadette,

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Virtual Pilgrimage to Lourdes Comes to St. Raphael on Monday, Oct. 2 *continued from front cover*

the apparitions of Our Lady of Lourdes, and the miracles of Lourdes by the projection of pictures of each place on a large screen while the pilgrim leader provides a moving narrative about Bernadette and Our Lady. At specific points in the narration, pilgrims will have an opportunity to touch genuine Grotto rocks and bless themselves with Lourdes Holy Water. In addition to the visual and the tactile, pilgrims will pray, sing, spend time in adoration and meditation, receive a Eucharistic Blessing, and pray the Rosary in procession, just as actual pilgrims to Lourdes do on a daily basis. At the end of the pilgrimage, all pilgrims will receive a small bottle of Lourdes Holy Water taken from the spring in the Grotto.

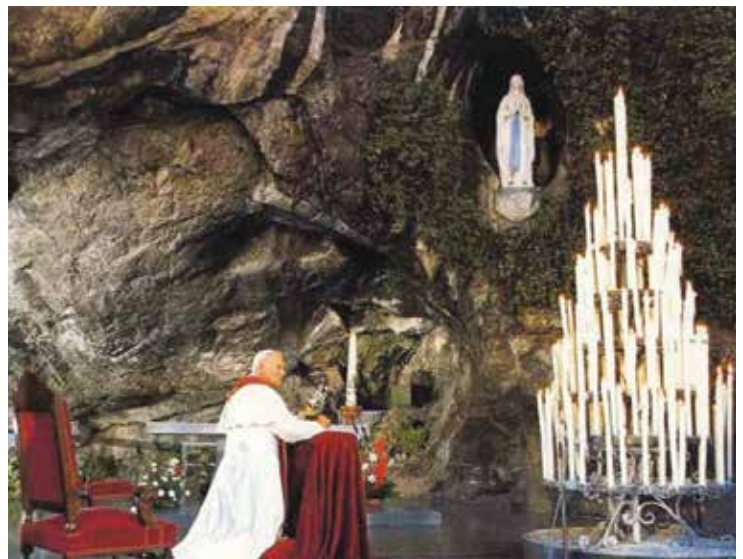
By Papal Decree, all who attend the Our Lady of Lourdes Virtual Pilgrimage Experience will receive a Plenary Indulgence once all requirements are performed.

There is no fee for the Lourdes Virtual Pilgrimage Experience, but a free-will offering will be taken during the pilgrimage.

Parishioner Nancy Czupik has served at Lourdes with Our Lady of Lourdes Hospitality, and also has attended Lourdes Virtual Pilgrimage Experiences in other states.

"This is such a great opportunity for the people of St. Raphael," Nancy says of the Virtual Pilgrimage. "The way this is presented is really Lourdes – Our Lady's presence is palpable as she invites all of us to come, to see her and, most of all, to adore her Son. Our parish is fortunate to be the first in the Diocese of Cleveland to experience the Lourdes Virtual Pilgrimage."

The Lourdes Virtual Pilgrimage Experience will take place in the Parish Activities Center on Monday evening, Oct. 2, beginning at 7 p.m. The pilgrimage takes about 90 minutes, and it is appropriate for almost all ages.



*For more information, please contact the parish office at 440-871-1100.
For information about volunteering at the Shrine of Lourdes in France,
see the Our Lady of Lourdes Hospitality website – lourdesvolunteers.org.*

A Letter From Our Pastor

Save Room on Your Busy Schedules for Stewardship

My Dear Friends in Christ,

I don't know about you, but I still get a surge of adrenaline as the beginning of September approaches. Even though I'm no longer in school, I feel a sense of anticipation when I see the shelves filled with brand-new notebooks, composition books, and all the assorted items students use. I'm aware once again of the great hopes, exciting dreams, and good intentions that a new school year holds.

Even for those parishioners not directly involved in school, September marks new beginnings. Labor Day traditionally marks the unofficial end of the summer vacation season, and our calendars may reflect that.

Many of you have calendars a lot like mine — they're full year-round with appointments and obligations. But even for us, things get busier in September as various organizations that took a break during summer begin their regular round of meetings again.

Nevertheless, I have a request for you as you fill up your fall schedules. First thing, please put in some time to share the talents God has given you. As you are aware, as Christian disciples — as stewards — we are called to return to God a portion of the Time, Talent, and Treasure He has entrusted to us. We should make our commitments to God when we begin our planning, so that we don't offer Him just the scraps of time and energy left over after everything else.

Make this September the month you make a commitment to sing in the choir, including attending



rehearsals. Or begin working with our parish religious education in one way or another. Or decide to launder altar linens once a month. Or volunteer to help in the parish office one morning a week. Or help care for the parish grounds. Or join the Knights of Columbus. Or join a social service ministry. Or... well, you get the idea.

There are many ministries and groups within the parish where you can serve, and you'll find that you receive even as you give. Hardly anyone in the parish can't find at least one activity in which they can participate and which fits their

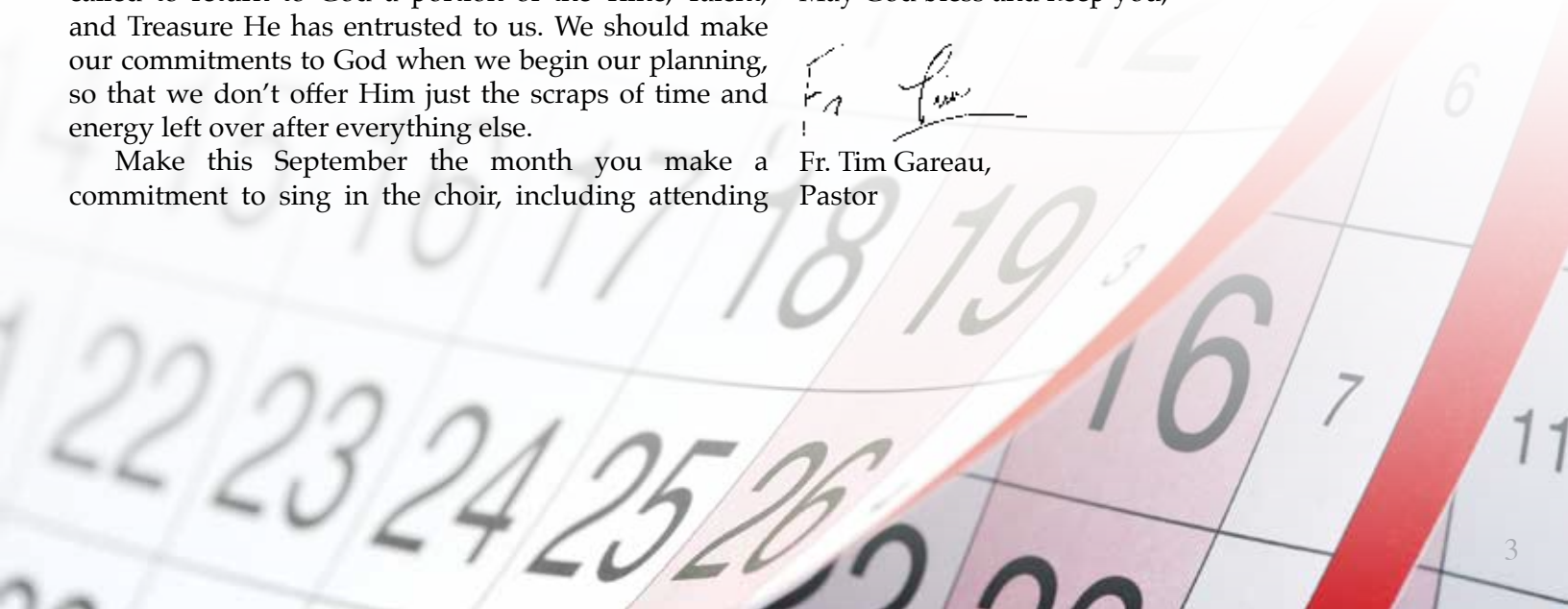
schedule. If **you** aren't involved, make this September the month to change that.

Thinking about commitments, some people say they don't have Time for prayer. Again, it's a matter of priorities, and I challenge any one of you to demonstrate to me that you can't pray at least one Our Father, one Hail Mary, and one Glory Be during the course of the day. That's at least a beginning.

May God bless and keep you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Fr. Tim Gareau". The signature is written over a faint background of a calendar grid.

Fr. Tim Gareau,
Pastor



The Parish Pastoral Council at St.

According to the *Catholic Code of Canon Law*, “If the diocesan bishop judges it opportune... a pastoral council is to be established in each parish, over which the pastor presides and in which the Christian faithful, together with those who share in pastoral care by virtue of their office in the parish, assist in fostering pastoral activity” (Canon 536.1). We are gifted with a Parish Pastoral Council here at St. Raphael which has as its goal: “to listen, inform, advise, and to lead in the direction which the pastor wishes.”

Our Parish Pastoral Council is one of the key leadership groups in our parish. It works, as stated, together with the pastor, and it is broadly representative of parish membership, clergy and laity. Its intent is to be an energizing, coordinating, and unifying representation of parish life, and should enable the individual members to have access to the processes that guide, direct and support various aspects of parish life. We are all aware that our Pastor serves the parish, which is entrusted to him by the Bishop of Cleveland. Our Parish Pastoral Council is a consultative body that unites laity and clergy in a community of prayer, leadership, service, and pastoral planning. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the Council may recommend policies for mission and faith.

Effective July 1, Rey Rivera assumed the role of Chair of the Council. He had served two years previously as the Vice President, and according to parish plan, he will be the President for two years. Rey points out that it is difficult to completely pin down all the ways that Parish Pastoral Council serves.



Vice Council Chair Kelly Sommers

“I think you might say that we are the eyes and ears of the parish,” he says. “Our Parish Pastoral Council does many, many things in relation to our St. Raphael Parish. Fr. Tim is aware of almost everything, but it is impossible for him to hear everything from everyone. Our Council exists to fill the gaps in those communications. It is valuable to give feedback to Father and to keep him informed completely from a

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Raphael: A Parishioner Perspective



Council Chair Rey Rivera with his wife, Patty, and daughter, Olivia

parishioner perspective. That is what we try to do.”

Currently, there are 17 people on the Council—16 laymen and laywomen and one high school student.

“We think it is important for the youth to participate and be part of the process,” Rey says. “We ask people to

give us a two-year commitment when they begin, but it is possible to serve longer. For example, I have served for four years all together, and I will be Chair for the next two years.”

The Council meets every other month, six times a year. Our meetings are not lengthy, usually not more than

an hour. The meetings are announced well in advance and they are open to the public. Our meetings follow a format of prayer, Scripture, discussion, hearing reports from representatives of the Finance Committee, the school, the parents group, etc.

In addition to Rey’s leadership, Kelly Sommers serves as Vice Chair and Tiffany Burke is the Council Secretary.

“The Chair and Vice Chair meet with Father well in advance of meetings, to set the agenda for the next meeting,” Rey says. “I find our meetings to be a very open environment and forum.”

The Church is the living body of Christ in which all share in various and diverse ways the responsibility for the mission given to the Church by the Lord. According to Canon 515, “A parish is a definite community of the Christian faithful stably constituted in a particular church, whose pastoral care of the parish is entrusted to a pastor (*parochus*) as its proper pastor (*pastor*) under the authority of the diocesan bishop.” A parish is a combination of clergy, religious and laity together. The People of God have different gifts, yet all are under one head, Christ Jesus.

For more information on the Parish Pastoral Council, please contact Chair Rey Rivera at 216-403-0714 or imanrivera3131@yahoo.com, or Vice Chair Kelly Sommers at 440-522-8014 or Kelly.karensommers@att.net. Biographies of all Council members are available on the parish website.



Back to the Basics: Parenting 101

It's back-to-school time again.

Parents are scrambling to unearth last year's backpack, purchase a mountain of school supplies, and find the perfect lunchbox that won't become a fading fad a few weeks after school begins.

Yet, these seemingly menial tasks are important — the role of parents in education is vital to classroom success. Studies reveal that increased parental involvement directly correlates to increased academic achievement.

Our role as parents, therefore, is crucial. We take the education of our children seriously and don't hesitate to drop everything to review spelling words, check homework or explain a math concept — not to mention the high volume of energy we exert washing uniforms, finding school shoes, making lunches, and carting children back and forth.

All of this is done in hopes of academic success and future security.

However, in light of these efforts, it is also important to examine what we as parents do for our children's spiritual formation. Many years ago, as we held our children at the baptismal font, we promised to "accept the responsibilities

of Christian parenthood" by teaching our children through "word and example."

All too often, however, the spiritual formation of our children is lost in a sea of homework and extracurricular activities. We placate ourselves with the notion that they receive adequate spiritual education during religion class at school or through the parish religious education program.

Yet, we are exceedingly misled! Religious education is intended to merely *reinforce* what is taught at home. Parents are the *primary educators* of their children and are expected to pass on the faith through "word and example."

"Parents are catechists precisely because they are parents," explains the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in the *National Directory for Catechesis*. "Their role in the formation of Christian values is irreplaceable. They should speak naturally and simply about God and their faith, as they do about other matters they want their children to understand and appreciate."

Where do we begin? First and foremost, we must start with prayer and ask the Holy Family to guide our efforts in the spiritual

education of our children. Bless the food before meals. Establish a simple routine of family morning and night prayer — a recitation of the "Morning Offering" upon waking, and an "Act of Contrition" at night is a sufficient starting point.

Also, keep in mind that it is impossible to pass on the faith to our children if we do not constantly pursue its knowledge and practice it ourselves. Faith formation is a lifelong process and we, as parents, are not exempt! Take advantage of the parish adult faith formation programs and seek spiritual reading — the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* is a great place to start.

Rest assured that your efforts will produce a firmly grounded spiritual foundation for your children.

And the reward? An unwavering hope in life eternal!



The Social Concerns Ministry at St. Raphael

“Many Hands Make Light Work”

Service and outreach are two key aspects of stewardship. Perhaps the greatest single outreach ministry we have is our Social Concerns Ministry. Fall is a time of thanksgiving – it is also a time for each of us as individuals and for our parish to share our time, our talent, and our treasures. This ministry is a way for us to become involved with the lives of those less fortunate in the parish and the ever-widening circles throughout the Cleveland and Lorain areas. Following are a wide range of activities in which you may wish to get involved in some way.

Disposable diapers and wipes are collected throughout the month of September to help many families who are struggling to provide for the needs of children. The diapers and wipes are delivered to West Side Catholic, St. Malachi Center, and Providence House. For more information, please contact Connie and Walter Lyons at 216-221-3186.

The St. Vincent de Paul Society holds what we call Blanket Sunday the weekend of Oct. 7-8. Envelopes to support this effort are attached to each bulletin. Donations received are used to purchase blankets to assist needy families, children and the elderly. The children of our parish make a cash donation, as well as color a paper quilt square. That quilt is displayed in the hallway of our school, thanks to Jan Murphy and Cathy Gregg. For more information on this project, please contact Michelle Walsh (contact information below).

Beginning on Friday, Oct. 20, and continuing until Nov. 16, we hold our annual Helping Hands-Thanksgiving Food Basket collection. There are boards in the Gathering Area and in Good Shepherd Square on which are placed paper leaves describing the needs. The leaves list non-perishable items for the food baskets or gift cards for turkeys. Help is always needed to prepare and deliver the baskets. Claudia and Dave Volosin (440-871-9029), Jennifer Englesburg, Jo Ann Gill, Melissa Malley, Jeremy Thomas, and Abbie Ols will coordinate this effort.

Each year, our school children donate Halloween candy and bags for the Thanksgiving baskets. The Guild collects Halloween costumes, as well. Details on this endeavor are in the parish bulletin.

Thanksgiving pies are donated to local centers. The Social Concerns Ministry provides crusts and canned pumpkin on Nov. 11-12. Envelopes are also made available to donate money to purchase pies. Again, help is needed to pass out the crusts and to deliver pies. For information on this, please

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St. Raphael

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Would you like to stay connected to the Parish using E-Mail? Then please share it with us. Just go to our Parish Website, www.saintraphaelparish.com, and enter the information under "Staying Connected Thru E-Mail". Information will not be shared and you can remove it at any time. Contact Mark Cunningham in the Parish office with questions at (440) 871-1100.

The Social Concerns Ministry at St. Raphael *continued from page 7*

contact Rob and Hillary Keberdle at 440-835-1452.

On Sunday, Nov. 12, is our Annual Pancake Breakfast, held in the PAC from 8 a.m. until noon. This breakfast has no cost except a donation, and funds raised go towards the various Social Concerns Holiday Programs. The contacts for this occasion are Toni and Tom Mullee (440-899-7529).

The Fragapane's, Panera Bread, Outback, and Carrabba's Italian Restaurant pickup occurs year round. However, the donuts, bread, rolls, and leftovers require drivers. The foods

are delivered to St. Malachi Backdoor, West Side Catholic, and the St. Augustine Hunger Center. Please contact Pat Pierce at 440-570-4314 to volunteer or for more information.

Our Holy Father Pope Francis has consistently pointed to the necessity for us as a Church and as people to reach out to the poor and those in need. Recently, he said, "None of us can think we are exempt from concern for the poor and for social justice." Our St. Raphael Social Concerns Ministry certainly addresses that fact.

It is your support and your help that make a difference in our parish, our community, and our world. There will be a Social Concerns Ministry Information meeting on Wednesday, Sept. 13, at 7:30 p.m. in the library. All are welcome. Indeed, many hands make light work. For more information relating to anything in this ministry, please contact Michelle Walsh at 440-871-7609.

Liturgy Schedule

Saturday Vigil: 4:30 p.m. | **Sunday:** 8:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., noon

Weekday Mass: M, T, W, F, 7:45 a.m. | M, T, Th, F, 9:15 a.m. | Saturday, 8:30 a.m.

Confessions: Saturdays 3:00 - 4:00 p.m. | **Eucharistic Adoration:** Friday 10:00 a.m. - Saturday 4:00 p.m.