

IV Sunday in Ordinary Time

Mass Intentions

Sat., January 30

2 Sm 12:1-7a, 10-17; Ps 51:12-17; Mk 4:35-41

4 pm ... ✠Ronald Robichaud by Mary Robichaud

Sun., January 31

IV Sunday in Ordinary Time

Jer 1:4-5, 17-19; Ps 71:1-6, 15, 17; 1 Cor 12:31 — 13:13 [13:4-13]; Lk 4:21-30

7:30 am ... ✠Sylvia Hobbs (37th Anniv.) by Cynthia Hobbs

9:30 am ... Eileen Smith (living) by Catechumen Steering Com.

5 pm ... ✠Mary Marszal by Richard Bienvenue

Mon., February 1

2 Sm 15:13-14, 30; 16:5-13; Ps 3:2-7; Mk 5:1-20

12 pm ... Gloria Murphy (living)

Tue., February 2

Presentation of the Lord

Mal 3:1-4; Ps 24:7-10; Heb 2:14-18; Lk 2:22-40 (22-32)

12 pm ... ✠Ara Taylor by Eileen & Denny Smith

Wed., February 3

Saints Blaise and Ansgar

2 Sm 24:2, 9-17; Ps 32:1-2, 5-7; Mk 6:1-6

12 pm ... Our Parish Family

Thur., February 4

1 Kgs 2:1-4, 10-12; 1 Chr 29:10-12; Mk 6:7-13

8:30 am ... ✠Frederick Myrdek by Diane Bolton

Fri., February 5

Saint Agatha

Sir 47:2-11; Ps 18:31, 47, 50, 51; Mk 6:14-29

6 pm ... ✠Richard Kirouac by Rita Montpelier

Sat., February 6 **Saint Paul Miki and Companions**

1 Kgs 3:4-13; Ps 119:9-14; Mk 6:30-34

4 pm ... ✠Leo & ✠Doris Moreau by her family

Sun., February 7 **V Sunday in Ordinary Time**

Is 6:1-2a, 3-8; Ps 138:1-5, 7-8; 1 Cor 15:1-11 [3-8, 11]; Lk 5:1-11

7:30 am ... ✠Richard Foley by Connie Raymond

9:30 am ... ✠Mary Marszal by Lena Krager

5 pm ... Our Parish Family



Sanctuary candle The sanctuary candle burns this week for **Our Parish Family**.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sun. January 31

10:30 am ... Coffee & Doughnuts

Mon., February 1

6:30—8 pm .. Youth Ministry/Gr. 6-12

7—8 pm ... Food Pantry

Tue. February 2

12:30 pm ... Parish Nurse

Thur., February 4

7:30—8:45 pm ... Choir Practice

Sat., February 6

9 am ... St. Patrick Committee Mtg



Saint Raphael Food Pantry On Monday, Jan. 25, the food pantry served **30** families and gave out **44** bags of groceries.



Please pray for the repose of the souls of ✠**Lorraine (Pratt) Lynch**, who died Jan. 24, and ✠**Joyce (Lefebvre) Trott**, who died Jan. 26, both of whose funerals were celebrated by P. Jerome last week.

In Sympathy

Weekly Collection

January 24, 2016

Regular Offertory	\$3,289.00
Make-Up Offertory	261.00
Loose Offertory	
475.95 Online Parish Giving	
260.00 Total	\$4,285.95
Stewardship	\$
85.00	
Holy Day	\$

WINTER WEATHER POLICY

If the Manchester Public Schools are closed due to weather conditions, all parish facilities are closed. Classes and practices are also canceled. Check WMUR and our Facebook page to see if Masses are canceled.



If you would like to obtain a statement for your 2015 contributions, please contact Kerri at 623.2604 / secretary@saint-raphael-parish.com



Saint Valentine's Brunch following the 9:30 am Mass on Sunday, Feb. 14. Watch for further details in the coming weeks. We hope you and your loved ones will join us!



Planning is under way for our annual **Saint Patrick's Dinner** on **Saturday, March 5, 2016**. We are accepting donations or monetary / gift card donations for our raffles. Items can be dropped off at the rectory M—F between 9 am and 4 pm. Tickets will be \$15 each. Please call the rectory at 623-2604 or stop in between 9am and 4pm to purchase tickets, which will be available beginning next week.

Pastor's Class



Mercy in Scripture—

Join P. Jerome, O.S.B., pastor, for the winter session of The Pastor's Class, "The Love and Mercy of God." The class will be **Tuesdays from 7-9 p.m. on Feb. 9, 16 and**

23, and March 1 in the parish hall classroom. The course will examine the biblical concept of "hesed," or "steadfast love and mercy" in the pages of the Old and New Testaments. The course is part of our Saint Raphael observance of the Extraordinary Holy Year of Mercy in 2015-2016 called by Pope Francis. Please contact the parish office at 623-2604 if you are interested in attending!



Blessing of the throats — This coming **Wednesday, Feb. 3**, is the Feast of Saint Blaise, when the Church traditionally blesses throats and asks the intercession of Saint Blaise for God's protection of her children "from every disease and malady of

the throat." Throats will be blessed on Wednesday at the noon Mass and all Masses next weekend.

Christ stands as the central and pivotal event of human history

Stephen Hawking, 74, is one of the greatest thinkers alive today. I'd like to know 10 percent of what he does. He's been on my mind lately because a couple of news sites on the world wide web have been reporting that he has declared that mankind is on the brink of making its greatest discovery and achieving its most stunning breakthrough. Hawking is the **famous British astrophysicist** who was educated at **Oxford and Cambridge** and now teaches at Cambridge.

None of the sites tells us what, exactly, this **discovery or breakthrough** will be, only that Hawking believes it is just beyond the horizon due to the technological advances and scientific insights available today. Over the years, Hawking has made some strong **doomsday predictions**, so a positive spin is always nice. A while back, it was said he was big on a new brain pill, but that might have been a hoax. While not wishing to tangle with Professor Hawking, I would suggest that mankind's greatest discovery or breakthrough happened a long time ago with what theologians call "**the Christ event**." And, of course, it was primarily God's action.

The phrase "Christ event" is shorthand for the **incarnation, nativity, life, teaching, miracles, passion, death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth**. The Incarnation and Paschal Mystery of Christ, and everything in between, worked profound changes in our own self-understanding, capacity and destiny as human beings. Nothing has ever been their equal – or ever will be. In literature, we sometimes speak of a "caesura," a sharp change in sound patterns that interrupts a line of poetry. **Jesus is the caesura of human history**. His presence among us injects into historical time a divine being beyond all time. A moment of eternity or sacred time, or "**kairos**" in theological discourse, enters into

"**chronos**," or ordinary, human time.

With the presence of Jesus in our world and lives, each of us receives the fullness of divine mercy. As we reflect on what this



Professor Stephen Hawking (left) and Saint Thomas Aquinas

Extraordinary Holy Year of Mercy might be for us, we must not forget that **Jesus himself is the ultimate manifestation of and means to God's mercy**.

Whatever Hawking has in mind as a technological or scientific discovery or breakthrough, it likely will alter our experience of time and space much as the railroad, the automobile and the airplane have. But the **Christ event goes beyond discrete moments of time to embrace all chronological time by injecting into it the**

"**kairos**" of the Lord. For example, we are baptized into Christ during a ceremony on a specific day in a particular year at a certain place at a chosen hour. But we each have an immortal soul, something eternal, and we are joined to the Risen Christ beyond all time.

Moreover, our baptism enables us to encounter Christ not simply in our ordinary lives, 24/7 as they say, but makes it possible for us to hear his Word in Sacred Scripture, receive his life in the sacraments, especially his Body and Blood in the Eucharist, and receive the promise of eternal life and happiness in heaven. All of this is made possible by Christ's gift of his **Holy Spirit**, so the divine animates the whole of our spiritual lives even as we live within mundane,

ordinary time. In some ways, this may be likened to all the things a man can do with a gloved hand. He can chop wood, shovel snow, heat a horse shoe, drive a car, caress the head of a child. On a superficial level, the glove has done all this, but, in truth, the glove could do none of it without the warmth and strength of the living hand. The presence of divine life, light and love changes everything in our world!

This past week, on Thursday, Jan. 28, the Church celebrated the feast day of **Saint Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274)**. Thomas

clearly could give Stephen Hawking an intellectual run for his money, but, alas, the Dominican friar and priest who taught at the University of Paris lived eight centuries ago. Happily, Aquinas' approach to theology, one rooted in reason and faith, with a dash of humor and contemplation, has served the Church remarkably well. Those who seek to

dismiss, revile or repudiate Christianity attack the Thomistic method with little or no success. Instead, they simply walk around it, ignoring the claims it makes on any right thinking man or woman.

Sadly, Professor Hawking **dismisses religious faith**, and even more lamentably attributes many of the world's problems to religion without distinguishing between religion and the misuse and corruption of religious faith. That seems a little like outlawing marital intimacy because some people choose to express themselves through rape!

Stephen Hawking has achieved much and deserves respect in many areas. He has been the Lucasian Professor of Mathematics at Cambridge, a post once held by Sir Isaac Newton. Hawking, who suffers from Lou Gehrig's disease, or **amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS)**, a motor neuron disease in which the nerves controlling the muscles become inactive while the sensory nerves function normally, is also the director of research at the Centre for Theoretical Cosmology at Cambridge.

Hawking's **lack of faith and appreciation for religion** merits not so much our anger or even our irritation as it does our prayer. Thomas Aquinas understood that knowledge is a powerful tool and a wonderful gift, but that wisdom was to be valued even more highly. **Wisdom** is that gift of mind and heart that enables us to apply knowledge and understanding toward our rightful end, our destiny and the good of our human nature.

I suppose we will discover Hawking's great breakthrough and discovery in human history in due course. But let us pray that God grant each of us the wisdom to see that his greatest blessing came to us in the merciful gift of Jesus Christ. © Rev. Jerome Joseph Day, O.S.B.

