

Mass Intentions

Sat., March 4
4 pm ... ✠Leo & ✠Doris Moreau by Elaine Plourde

Sun., March 5 **I Sunday of Lent**
7:30 am ... ✠David & ✠Anne Foley by Connie Raymond
9:30 am ... ✠Joan McGorry Dimick (3rd Anniv) by Ellen McGorry
5 pm ... ❖Our Parish Family

Mon. March 6
12 pm ... ✠Marilyn Warren by Margaret-Ann Moran

Tue., March 7 **Saints Perpetua and Felicity**
12 pm ... ✠Diane Dupuis and father by P. Jerome

Wed., March 8 **Saint John of God**
12 pm ... Fr. Jerome by a friend

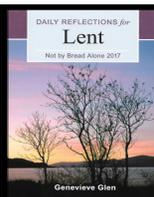
Thur., March 9 **Saint Frances of Rome**
8:30 am ... ✠Ed Lavoie by Lionel & Lillian Coulon

Fri., March 10
6 pm ... ✠Janet Chabot by Dorene Turner

Sat., March 11
4 pm ... ✠Ronald Johnson (7th Anniv.) by Armand & Kathy Carignan

Sun., March 12 **II Sunday of Lent**
7:30 am ... ❖Our Parish Family
9:30 am ... ✠Robert Lucci by Linda Beland
5 pm ... ✠Vicki Wolf by Lillian LaRochelle

 **Sanctuary candle** The sanctuary candle burns this week for ✠Br. Odo Nyanje, O.S.B. by P. Jerome

 **Daily Reflections for Lent** by Genevieve Glen are available in the Nook for \$2. You may pay for the book by including it with your offertory or leave your donation in the donation box in the nook. Thanks.

In Sympathy Please pray for the repose of the soul of ✠Joseph "Leo" Bedard, who died Feb. 25 and whose funeral Mass was celebrated by P. Jerome on Saturday, Mar. 4.

 Our annual **Saint Patrick's Dinner** will be **Saturday, March 11, 2017**. Tickets are \$15 each and are available following this weekend's Masses or at the rectory next week during regular business hours. Don't miss out!

READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF Mar. 5, 2017
Monday: Lv 19:1-2, 11-18; Ps 19:8-10, 15; Mt 25:31-46
Tuesday: Is 55:10-11; Ps 34:4-7, 16-19; Mt 6:7-15
Wednesday: Jon 3:1-10; Ps 51:3-4, 12-13, 18-19; Lk 11:29-32
Thursday: Est C:12, 14-16, 23-25; Ps 138:1-3, 7c-8; Mt 7:7-12
Friday: Ez 18:21-28; Ps 130:1-8; Mt 5:20-26
Saturday: Dt 26:16-19; Ps 119:1-2, 4-5, 7-8; Mt 5:43-48
Sunday: Gn 12:1-4a; Ps 33:4-5, 18-20, 22; 2 Tm 1:8b-10; Mt 17:1-9

Weekly Collection

Weekend of February 26, 2017
Regular Offertory \$2,719.00
Make-Up Offertory 1,030.00
Loose Offertory 614.55
Online Parish Giving 175.00
Total Offertory \$4,538.55
Stewardship \$ 130.00
Ash Wednesday \$1,056.80

Last Year: Weekend of February 28, 2016
Total Offertory \$5,049.20
Ash Wednesday \$ 884.00



FAST and ABSTINENCE Fridays during Lent are days of abstinence during Lent. **FASTING** is observed by all 18 years of age and older, who have not yet celebrated their 59th birthday. On a fast day, one full meal is allowed. Two other meals, sufficient to maintain strength, may be taken according to each one's needs, but together they should not equal another full meal. Eating between meals is not permitted, but liquids, including milk and juices, are allowed. **ABSTINENCE** is observed by all 14 years of age and older. On days of abstinence, no meat is allowed. Note that when health or ability to work would be seriously affected, the law does not oblige.

Saint Raphael Parish Lenten Calendar of Events

Sat., March 4
10 am ... Lenten Sun. Gspl Reading Disc.
5 pm ... Empty Bowl Soup Supper

Fri., March 10
6:45 pm ... Stations of the Cross

Sat., March 11
10 am ... Lenten Sun. Gspl Reading Disc.

Sat., March 18
10 am ... Lenten Sun. Gspl Reading Disc

Fri., March 24
6:45 pm ... Lenten Supper w/Guest Speaker

Sat., March 25
10 am ... Lenten Sun. Gspl Reading Disc.

Fri., March 31
6:45 pm ... Stations of the Cross **Sat., April 1** 10 am ... Lenten Sun. Gspl Reading Disc.

Wed., April 5
7:15 pm ... Penance & Reconciliation Svce.

Fri., April 7
6:30 pm ... Adorn. of Blessed Sacrament
6:45 pm ... Lenten Supper w/Guest Speaker

Sat., April 8
10 am ... Lenten Sun. Gspl Reading Disc.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Mon., March 6
6:30 pm ... Youth Ministry
6:30 pm ... St Patrick Committee meeting
7 pm ... Finance Council meeting
7-8 pm ... Food Pantry

Wed., March 8
7 pm ... Knit & Crochet

Sat., March 11
10 am ... Gospel Reading discussion—Parish Hall Classroom
5:30 pm ... St Patrick dinner—TICKETHOLDERS ONLY



Saint Raphael Food Pantry On Monday, February 27, the food pantry served 22 families and gave out 32 bags of groceries.



Sign up to host Vocation Chalice or Pilgrim Virgin statue Parishioners and friends of the parish are encouraged to sign up for either or both of these opportunities for two-week intervals during this Lenten season. Please **call the office at 623.2604** to



make arrangements. This is a great opportunity to develop prayer in your home and heart, to honor Mary and to ask God for the gift of new vocations!



Special thanks to parishioner, **Ken Marcoux**, for his gift of a lovely image of Our Lady of Sorrows to whom he has special devotion. The image will be on display in the chapel during Lent.

Lenten Prayer

Help me be patient on my Lenten journey, and open to the grace that will help me recognize opportunities to reach out to others.

Special effort to aid rebuilding birthplace, Basilica of Saint Benedict

Back in the fall of 2012, when our Saint Raphael **Roots/Routes of Faith pilgrimage** traveled to the great Catholic shrines of Italy, we all expected to see magnificent monuments to the faith, to share some of the best cuisine in the world and to meet welcoming and engaging people. We knew that the majesty of Rome, the elegance of Florence and the beauty of Venice would leave their mark upon us. We were moved by the impressive heights of Monte Cassino, the great monastery of Saint Benedict, and the cobbled streets of Assisi, the home of Saint Francis.

What we did not anticipate, what I never saw coming, was that one little hill town, tucked away in the mountains of Umbria, would captivate and charm us all in ways that are actually hard to describe. But the fact is, **little Norcia**, the birthplace of Saint Benedict, stole our hearts.

Maybe it is the setting. For me, a proud son of the Berkshires, with a real fondness for the White Mountains of New Hampshire, the setting in the Apennines was spectacular.

We arrived in Norcia on a **gently rainy day**, and the echo of places in Ireland was inescapable. When, in due course, the warm Italian sun came out, the town square must have been dazzling – but we loved it even as we dodged the raindrops. At the center of the square, a regal statue of **Saint Benedict (480-547), father of Western monasticism and a patron of European civilization**, gestures to his right, drawing the eye to the squat little **Basilica di San Benedetto**, the Benedictine church marking the birthplace of the founder of the Church's oldest religious order.

We prayed at the church, visited with some members of the community now rebuilding monastic life in Norcia, craned our necks at the bell tower that

summons townspeople to Mass and prayer, and saw the arched gallery where farm and craft stalls sometimes are often set up on market days. We wound our way down into the crypt to pray at the Roman ruins of what is believed to have been the **home of Benedict and his twin sister, Saint Scholastica**. We saw ancient mosaics and medieval murals and statuary, but on a very humane scale. The Norcia basilica welcomed us and **drew us into the intimacy of its history and community**,

precisely the way the *Holy Rule* of Saint Benedict draws a newcomer or visitor into the life of a community monk or nuns.

Elsewhere in the town, we visited colorful shops and galleries, most, if not all of it produced by the townspeople, who have become rather used to seeing monks and nuns in flowing robes wandering around their streets with cameras and iPhones in hand. We saw **the impressive old town hall** and the town's **cathedral**.

Despite its diminutive size, Norcia remains the seat of a diocese and has its own cathedral, partly in recognition of its **historic meaning**

for Benedictines around the world, I suppose. There's a museum on the square too; it's in an old armory, I think.

Why do I mention all of this about a trip to Norcia nearly five years ago? **Because it's all gone.**

From this past August to the end of October, central

Italy was shaken three times by earthquakes, all 6.0 or more on the **Richter scale**, then aftershocks, that left thousands homeless, injured many and killed more than 300. The last quake, centered near Norcia and measuring **6.6**, was the worst since 1980. Miraculously no one was killed. Townspeople slept in tents or in the open air for weeks as they sorted through the wreckage of their homes. Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Nazareth, Capernaum, Rome, Assisi, Lisieux, Avila,

Lourdes and Fatima: these are all names of places precious to our Christian faith and Catholic identity. Norcia is less well known, but for Benedictines, it **occupies the third spot in a trinity of beloved places** – even for those monks and nuns who have never

had the chance to see it. With **Monte Cassino**, where Benedict wrote his famous Holy Rule around the year 529, and with **Subiaco**, the monastery where he first lived as a hermit and then established his initial communities, Norcia claims our attention and affection. It is **a place we love to speak about with those we serve**, our parishioners, students and visitors. **Within his own family**, Benedict first came to know the story of Christ's redemptive love and the way he reaches out to us in the



biblical Word and in the touch of his Sacraments. It was within his family that Benedict first learned the value of **community**, the power of **prayer**, the importance of forgiveness **and fidelity** and the life-giving effects of **love and respect**. Sent to Rome as a youth for his education,

Benedict eventually turned his back on the corruption and licentiousness of the capital. Amid the rubble of the fallen empire and the violence of the emerging barbarian kingdoms, Rome was a difficult place to live the life of the soul. Benedict withdrew to the very mountains he had known as a child – and there embraced the monastic ideal that had come from the East.

The rebuilding effort will be quake-proof and significant. I pray that **our Saint Raphael parishioners**, as well as **our friends and visitors**, will help support it. Demands on the monastery and basilica, as well as multiple needs among the villagers in Norcia, are extensive. Happily, the Italian government and the European Union will assist the townspeople in some substantial ways, but **the monks and the historic monastic properties need the help of the Church worldwide**.

There are needs everywhere, but Norcia is ours – and I ask each of our parishioners to reflect on some measure of support. At Saint Anselm, similar efforts to contribute to relief and rebuilding projects will be under way too.

On **the weekend of March 18-19**, as we mark the **Third Sunday in Lent**, we will take up a second collection for the relief and reconstruction in Norcia. The date precedes the celebration on **Tuesday, March 21, of the Solemnity of the Transitus of Our Holy Father Benedict**, when the Church, and especially the Benedictine order, marks the death of its founder. Each gift is meant to be a **contribution above and beyond** our regular support of the parish each week and our special tithing contribution each month. May we remember the generous and sacrificial contributions my Benedictine confreres have made to the heart, mind and soul of this community ever since 1888. Even more important, I ask that each of us keeps the villagers and monks at Norcia, as well as all those affected by the earthquakes, in our prayer.

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